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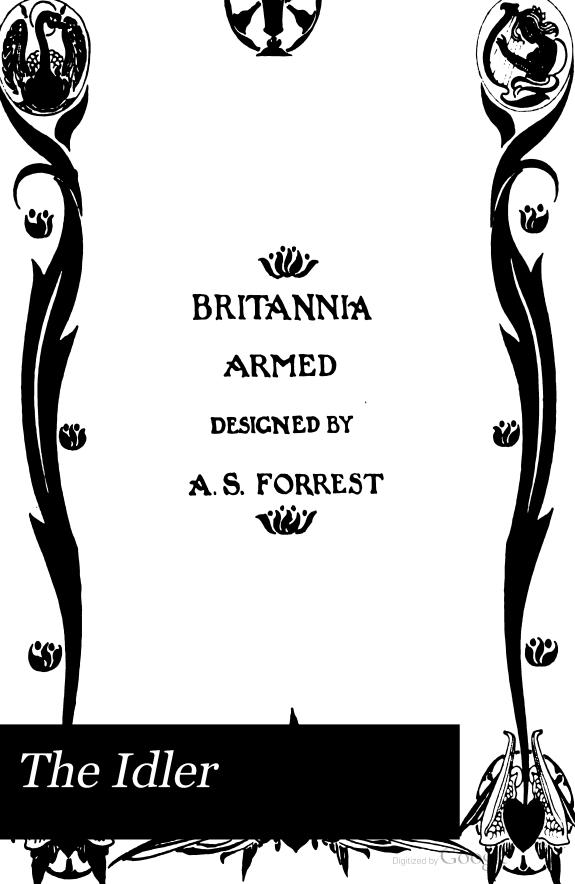
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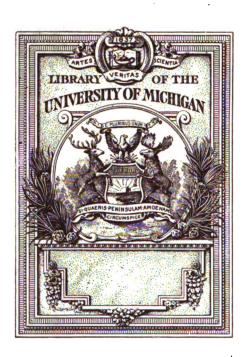
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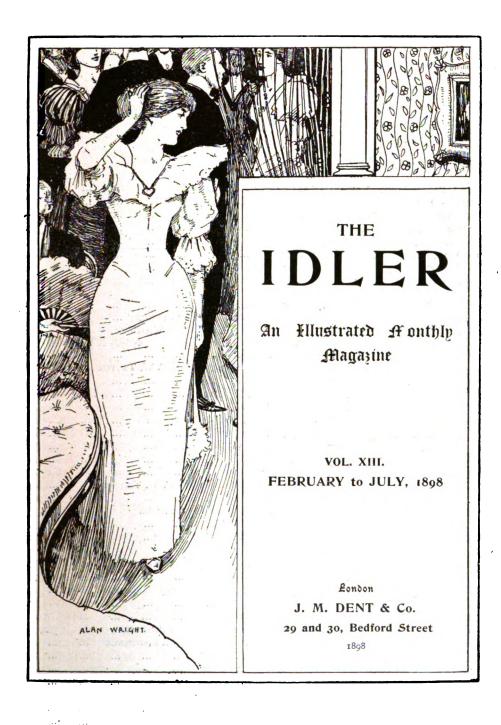








Come the three corners of the world in arms
And we shall shock them: nought shall
make us rue
If England to itself do rest but true.





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WARWICK GOBLE.

CHAPTER I.

Y dear mother has often amused me with tales of the old days and memorable scenes of twenty years ago at Zerbst, our home. My mother was then but a child of fourteen years, and my father a boy of about the same age, and many a time have I laughed to hear her describe how fondly he, the young Count von Adlerberg, courted her even then, and how my dear mother had a rival in the person of the little Princess Sofie, daughter of the Duke of Anhalt-Zerbst-Dornburg. This little princess played with the rest as an equal, receiving no particular honour from any of the children, her playmates, by reason of her exalted rank; she was three years younger than my mother, being then but eleven years of age; yet she was all for supplanting my mother in the affections of this young count, who afterwards became my father; and indeed Fie-chen, or Figchen, as she was called by her playmates, was more noted among the children of Zerbst for her anxiety to stand well in the good graces of each little boy of the community than for her position as daughter of the reigning Duke.

later days, have I thought deeply upon these early indications of the character of this wonderful princess, and laughed sometimes—ay! and cried sometimes also, as I compared her conduct then with that which I have seen of her in my own day, and suffered from her in my own experience. Who ever would have believed that things could have happened as they have, and that this little wilful Figchen of the Zerbst of my mother's childhood should have developed into the greatest woman in Europe, and perhaps one of the greatest that the world has ever seen; and that, in spite of her greatness, the Catherine of to-day should still remain in the matter of certain characteristics as to which I have already hinted—the same Figchen as of old! Verily the child is father of the man, and little Figchen is own mother to the great Catherine.

For little Princess Sofie, some four or five years later, being then still scarcely more than a child, was summoned to fulfil her destiny of betrothal and marriage, having been selected by the Empress Elizabeth of Russia, at the recommendation of Frederick the Great of Prussia, as the bride of her nephew, the Grand Duke Imperial, or as they call him, the Tsarevitch of Russia; a brilliant destiny indeed for a minor German Princess, even though

she had remained at that, and soared no higher in ambition!

I have laughed many a time with my dear mother over her account of the hurried departure of little Princess Figchen with her mother the Duchess, and of how she, to carry with her to Russia, possessed but three dresses, all told, including her travelling costume, and for the rest twelve

chemises and twelve pairs of stockings; a fair supply of underwear, in comparison with the number of her frocks, but such as any less exalted German girl could equal and many would far surpass; and of how her father, the

Duke, who was not invited by the Empress, gave to Figchen, parting, little pamphlet of his own, showing how she might marry this MuscoviteGrand Duke, and yet escape conformity to the religion, which as a Muscovite he must profess. My mother did

not learn, until afterwards, how foolishly the Grand Duke Peter bore himself towards this same matter of his change of religion; for, though grandson of Peter the Great, this youth was a Holstein Prince, and a German of the Germans, and the little sympathy he possessed for religion of any description was wholly Lutheran; so that in the end Sofie herself took the pill of Conversion without a tithe of the grimacing and resistance with which her fiance thought fit to swallow the dose.

My dear mother was already happily married to my father, the Count von Adlerberg, at the time when Figchen received her marching orders to the Russian Court; and, indeed, I myself had been born for nearly two years. The princess had, by that time, forgiven both my father and my mother for marrying one another, a matter, indeed, as to which she had of course no

juris diction
whatever, though
she was pleased
to be offended
with both at the
time of their betrothal, for Figchen could never
spare any man
to any maiden
if so be the man

were personable and

good-looking. So that I may say that the princess was acquainted with me very long before I became consciously acquainted with her, she having seen and petted me

as an infant, whereas at my first introduction to her Highness as an intelligent creature, furnished with an adult memory and a pair of observant eyes, she was no longer the Figchen of old, but her Imperial Highness Catherine, Tsaritsa that was to be over all the Russias.

to be over all the Russias, and at that time Tsarevna or wife of the Imperial Prince. How it happened that I became acquainted with her in that exalted capacity is that which I am to narrate in these memoirs of my eventful life.

During my childhood I was face to face continually with the name of the Grand Duchess, without very clearly knowing to whom the talk referred; for my father or mother would occasionally receive a letter from the Envoy of the King of Prussia at the Court of St. Petersburg, a near friend



One of my chief delights was to ride about by myself.

of my parents, and would discuss the news therein contained without, perhaps, sufficiently considering that the little pitcher, their daughter, possessed a pair of long ears, which took in and remembered many of their remarks without altogether understanding their purport.

In this way I became aware that "Figchen," as my parents still called the Grand Duchess in speaking of her, was mated to the merest clown of a prince, with whom she could have nothing in common: a keen soldier, indeed, but one whose interest in and knowledge of soldiering began and ended in the drill yard, and who would rather his warriors had every buckle duly burnished and every wig tail symmetrical than that they should go forth and capture a fortress: a youth who had served as a soldier from the age of six upwards, and—as a sergeant of nine-had stood sentry at his German father's banquet-room door, and cried as the dishes were carried past him because the smell of them was so delicious and he might not partake.

The Grand Duchess and her husband were, I knew, childless; but I well remember the day when my father received a letter from his friend at the Court acquainting him with the news that, after nearly ten years of married life, the Grand Duke Paul was born. I remember how my parents passed that letter, of which they read little aloud, from one to the other and back again; and how my mother blushed, and said that she would not believe one word of it, and how my father laughed, and said "Fie!" and "Who would have believed such things of our little Figchen?" and how my mother protested again and again that there could be no truth in such things, and that the Ambassador Kreutz was a spiteful old man, and ought not to be allowed to belittle the great ones of the earth by base and groundless insinuations such as

My father, I remember, finished read-

ing the letter alone, and remarked at the end of it that the chamberlain Soltikof was, nevertheless, banished.

All this was, naturally, Greek to my child ears; but there came a time when I recalled both this and many other matters of which my parents had spoken with reference to her whom they still called "Figchen."

And meanwhile I grew up to the age of fifteen or sixteen, at which time I was a well-developed girl, looking considerably older than my actual years; and at this time also I paid my father and mother the compliment of imitating their own behaviour when of an age corresponding to mine, by falling very deeply in love, just as they themselves had done as prematurely as I. I was, I believe, an extremely romantic young personage at this time, but that was no peculiarity among the little German maidens of the period; we were one and all like small kittens watching at the mouse-hole Romance for the mouse Love to jump out into our mouths, and I, for one, proved a good mouser.

The circumstances, in my own case, were certainly romantic. I will here explain how Romance and I first became acquainted. We Adlerbergs have ever been an open-air loving, horse-riding race, and one of my chief delights in the old days at Zerbst was to ride about by myself among the hills and forests around our Anhalt home. I might have had companions in plenty, but I greatly preferred to be free to ride where I would by myself, and though my parents at first forbade this, excepting within a radius of a mile or two of the town, yet afterwards, finding that no harm ever happened to me, and that my old pony Fritz and I thoroughly understood one another, they placed no restriction upon my excursions, bidding me ride where I would, provided only that I did not lose my way. which indeed would have been difficult. for I knew every inch of the country for miles around.

One afternoon I rode out as usual, anticipating no more eventful a gallop than my usual daily excursion. I had not awaked that morning with any consciousness or presentiment that this day would be a remarkable and memorable one in my life; it began like any other summer morning, in radiance of light and the singing of birds and in a million perfumes that burdened the soft air of June, but my heart was neither gladder nor less joyful than usual, and there was nothing to show me that this day was the greatest of all days for me: a day, indeed, from which I was destined to date all things from this time forward; the real beginning of my existence, the red-letter day of my life, upon which I first beheld my Douglas.

I rode out, I say, as usual, taking one of my favourite roads, that which lay through the forest towards Hundelust; and I had ridden a few miles when my pony Fritz suddenly did that for which he has felt remorse and shame ever since, as I firmly believe, though indeed I have thoroughly forgiven him, and thank the Lord daily for his fault. He shied madly across the road, brushed me up against a dense thorn-bush, which caught my dress and pulled me out of the saddle, and himself rushed away at full gallop. The cause of his sudden alarm was a great boar, which had appeared round the corner of the briar-bush, just as we approached it, but which, most fortunately, must have been at least as much startled as poor Fritz himself, for it instantly turned and fled squeaking and grunting in the opposite direction, and was seen and heard no more.

Now this was providential from my point of view; for I soon found that the thorns had taken so firm a hold upon my riding skirt, and indeed upon my dress at every part, that I was unable to rise, or even to move hand or foot; so that if he had remained to vent his fury upon me, as most boars would have done, instead

of running startled away like any little pig in the farmyard, I should have been utterly helpless to resist his attacks, and should have been ripped and murdered in a moment.

So, finding myself a prisoner, and the boar safely away, I first lay and laughed, struggling to free myself the while, and never doubting but that in a short while I should succeed, at the expense of a few rents in my skirt, indeed, which I must afterwards endeavour to mend so skilfully as to avoid my mother's serious displeasure, but still that succeed I should. But, to my surprise, I found that I met with no success whatever: I was almost as securely fastened as though men had taken cords and tied me hand and foot, and moreover, when I struggled and moved my limbs, the thorns so asserted themselves that it was desirable to remain quiet; whereas, while I did so remain, I was by no means uncomfortable.

When I discovered this, I laughed again, but not quite so gaily as the first time, and set myself to wonder how I should employ my time until succour arrived. That succour would arrive I made no doubt at all, for this was in a manner a high road from Hundeluft to Zerbst, and though the traffic was very circumscribed, yet it was not to be expected that during the whole of a long June day no single traveller would pass this way, either going or coming.

Meanwhile Fritz came back. He looked ashamed of himself, his head drooped, with the bridle hanging over it and catching underfoot at every few steps in a most uncomfortable manner. Fritz was very fond of me; he was my best friend, and was well aware of it, and his conscience had certainly smitten him because of his conduct in first throwing me, and then leaving me to my fate. He was greatly relieved, however, to hear my voice, and though at first much puzzled because I did not rise and mount him, but lay on, was satisfied upon hearing me

speak to him as usual; and concluding, I suppose, that I preferred for reasons of my own to lie still awhile, he rubbed me with his soft nose a few times, and then philosophically walked about close by, nibbling the grasses and flowers that grew by the roadside.

But the day dragged on, and I began to grow hungry and somewhat disturbed in mind.

Nevertheless, the hours passed one by one and no help came. The mellow afternoon faded into the duller evening; Fritz grew wondering and impatient; he sniffed at me, as fearing that I might be hurt, he pushed at my arms in order that I might reassure him by patting, but pricked his nose and desisted. Occasionally he stood looking up and down the road, and neighed; but he did not desert me, for which I was grateful.

Nevertheless, I grew frightened and rather miserable; I laughed now no more, but rather felt inclined to cry; and I prayed fervently for help. Almost immediately my prayers were answered—and oh! how delightfully Fritz had stood and neighed for the tenth time (summoning assistance, I am sure, after his fashion!) when his neighing was responded to from a distance. There was another horse, then, within hearing, and even to know this sent a flow of comfort to my heart. God grant there might be a rider as well!

At any rate, the horse approached; my ear was so near the ground that, presently, I could hear its trotting distinctly, though it was still far away.

Nearer it came. I heard a few deer get up and scud from before it; they passed me, and to my joy, someone, the rider of the horse, doubtless, gave a halloo as he caught sight of the game.

"Thanks be to the Lord!" I thought, "I am saved; it is probably one of the Duke's huntsmen!"

CHAPTER II.

He rode into sight the next moment;

not one of the Duke's huntsmen, but Douglas.

A stranger, as I could see at a glance; it seems odd that Douglas should ever have been a stranger to me, yet a stranger he was until that day of days, and he came riding up the road, straight and handsome as a god, looking forward after the scudding deer with the keen pleased smile of the sportsman who has viewed fine game.

I struggled madly to be free, for it had suddenly struck me that I could not see how I lay, and whether my skirts were modestly draped or no; and I so far succeeded as to raise my neck sufficiently high to assure myself that all was well.

Then he came level with my thorn-bush, still looking after the deer, and such a passion of shyness came over me that I could not utter a sound to attract his attention; for he looked neither to right nor left but only straight forward, and did not see me.

But the pony Fritz, trotted neighing up to the side of the stranger's horse; and then he saw Fritz, observing immediately that he carried a saddle but no rider; he drew rein.

"Why," he said, in English, "pony! what is it—where is your rider?" he looked to right and left, but I was now behind him.

"I am here, Herr Officer!" I piped out, gathering courage enough for this, but blushing furiously.

"Lieber Gott in Himmel!" exclaimed the stranger in German now, for I had spoken German; he leaped from his horse, leaving it to fraternise with Fritz, if it would, and sprang towards me.

"What is it, Fraulein," he cried, "has there been an accident, are you hurt? Fool that I was to pass you by!"

"I am not hurt at all," I said, more bravely now, for the look of him cheered and encouraged me; he seemed so frank and kind and handsome and so young—not more than eighteen, I guessed, though I learned afterwards that he was twenty. "I am not hurt, but I am in prison!"



"You are a witch, Countess Elsa."

"Ha!" he laughed merrily, discerning the nature of my plight. "I see, captured by the Erlking's myrmidons, and in the hands of the wicked enchantress Briarbush! then, behold! I am the fairy prince who has come to release you! lord! what thorns you grow here! no wonder you could not free yourself. May I cut the dress?"

"I don't know what my mother will say!" I blurted, and then blushed; blushed like a peony in shame for the silly remark.

But the stranger laughed gaily; "Ha! ha!" he cried, "there speaks the thrifty German Fraulein—I like it, I am half German myself, and the other half wicked, extravagant English. Now see, my thrifty German half says, 'Spare the dress and detach by slow labour and with many pricks the thorns.' My English half cries, 'Perish slow labour and all thrift, and let the skirt go!' I think the English in me preponderates, I will cut!"

He took his sword and cleared me as quickly as he could, but even so the process occupied a quarter of an hour, for what with the first fall and the subsequent struggles, I appeared to have been laid hold of by every thorn in the bush and each one held me jealously.

"See how enviously they hold you, Fraulein!" said my fairy prince; "they must be fought one by one; and one by one I shall vanquish your enemies. Thus I hack and hew them, there, and there! The enchantress' toils fall from about your limbs, in a moment you shall be free, so! Can you raise yourself? No? May I assist you to rise?"

I acquiesced, blushing and laughing. The stranger took me in his strong arms, treading the briars underfoot as he stood over me. He lifted me as though I were a feather and placed me clear of the thorn-bush

"There!" he said, "you are free. How young you are to be riding all alone; had you no companions?

"Oh no," I said, "I am sixteen, and I never have companions when I ride."

"To that I reply," he laughed, "that sixteen is a great age; and that if you live at Zerbst, and I have the honour to be introduced to your parents, I shall hope that during the short while I am in the town you will condescend, from time to time, to accept of a companion in your rides."

I said nothing, for my modesty forbade it; but I should have liked to say that I would be charmed indeed to exchange my solitude for such delightful companionship.

"Do you then leave Zerbst very soon?" I said, presently.

"Within a fortnight, Fraulein," he said; "for the Russian Court. I go partly on a mission from my master, Frederick the King, and partly on my own affairs, for strangely enough, though I am German on my father's side, and English or Scotch on my mother's, yet my property, such as it is, lies within the dominions of her Majesty Elizabeth the Empress."

"Whom you are now to serve?" I said, almost sighing; for it seemed very sad that I should have met this charming knight only to lose him again, and for ever, within a few days. We were mounted now, and riding side by side through the trees, beyond which, one could now catch a glimpse here and there of a radiant sunset.

"No, indeed!" he said, laughing again, "I am to enter the special service of his Imperial Highness the husband of your very remarkable Zerbst princess, quondam Sofie, now Catherine the Tsarevna."

"What, Figchen!" I blurted.

"Oh, hush!" said the stranger, "do not teach me her pet names! I must not think of my future mistress, or rather of the wife of my future master, as 'Figchen,' for me she is only her Imperial Highness Ekaterina Alexeyevna."

"I beg your pardon, Herr Officer;" I said, blushing; "my parents still speak of her by her child name, having been her

playmates as children, though both my father and my mother are considerably older than she is. I myself was two years old when the princess left Zerbst. I will think of her no longer as Figchen."

"No, no; I did but jest;" he laughed; "call her how you please, I have no doubt I shall give her the respect that is her due at St. Petersburg, even though she be plain Figchen at Zerbst. Now tell me how you came to be caught in the thorn-bush?"

I explained the disaster which had ended so pleasantly, giving the details as I have already narrated them.

"Lieber Himmel!" he exclaimed; "and you have lain there since noon? you must be starving—stay!" The stranger pulled up and prepared to help me from the saddle. "I have a little food and wine," he said, "let us rest awhile and take our supper!"

I consented, for—as a matter of fact—I was ravenous, and we sat and ate our food comfortably enough beneath a large oak. And here my new friend acquainted me with his name, which was Douglas von Doppelheim, and I told him my own, which was Elsa von Adlerberg, our rank, as it proved, being exactly equal; for I was Countess and he Count, or Graf, though he had this advantage over me, that he possessed the right to sundry titles and honours in Russia, besides his German rank, by virtue of his great uncle, General Patrick Gordon, the friend and chief military adviser of Peter the Great, whose estates in Russia were now, to a large extent, by inheritance his property.

My parents were beginning to be very anxious about me I found, and their delight and relief to see me safe rendered them most ready to accord to my companion very hearty words of welcome to Zerbst, together with many and sincere expressions of gratitude to him for having 'preserved' me. They were, moreover, deeply interested in the personality of my friend, as well as in the mission upon which he had come to our town: which

proved to be to talk over with the Duke and Duchess of Anhalt-Zerbst-Dornburg his approaching visit to St. Petersburg, and to beg them in the name of King Frederick, to write to their daughter Catherine upon certain political matters, as to the nature of which I then knew nothing. My parents held long consultations with the young Count upon the state of affairs at Court in St. Petersburg, and the unsatisfactory turn which they had taken in so far as concerned the married life of Princess Sofie of Zerbst and Prince Charles Holstein, now respectively Grand Duchess Catherine, and Grand Duke Peter, but since, when I was present, these conversations took place in guarded tones, which I was unable to catch, or else in enigmatical phrases, half uttered, and ended by shrug, of shoulders or other gestures of hand or eye which I did not understand, I did not gather much from their consultations.

This did not please me, for I disliked to be treated as a child, especially by Douglas; moreover, as a Zerbst girl I was naturally interested in the princess who had been taken, as it were, from amongst us and transplanted in a foreign soil; the old friend of my mother and father, and daughter of our own Duchess, whom I had very often heard speak of the greatness and grandeur of her Sofie's present position and future prospects, and of the charming married bliss in which she lived with her husband the Tsarevitch. Therefore I determined to question Douglas von Doppelheim upon these matters as to which he, with my parents, chose to maintain so much mystery. I had opportunities of private conversation with Douglas, for we rode constantly together, and I was no longer so shy with him as at first I had been, though I perhaps assumed a bolder attitude with him than was natural to me, because he was inclined to treat me as a child, and I was unwilling that he should thus think of me.

Accordingly I attacked him one afternoon.

"Herr Graf," I said, "I have observed that there exist mysteries or a mystery concerning the Princess Sofie, Catherine, and her relations with the Tsarevitch her husband, and the Tsaritsa Elizabeth. This mystery affords subject for many whispered conversations between yourself and my parents, but I, who am also interested in the Grand Duchess, she being a Zerbst princess, am not permitted to have any part in these conversations. Now, I have never before been excluded from free intercourse with my parents, therefore it is to yourself that I must attribute the present state of affairs, and from you I must have explanation."

The Count laughed, but he also coloured, I thought.

"Pardon, Countess Elsa," he said, "but you are as yet not very old, and there are matters—political and so on—that are not fit subjects for discussion before you.

"You think me a child," I said flushing, "and treat me like one."

"I think you a sweet maiden," he said, gravely, "one of whose charms, and perhaps her greatest, is the artlessness of her nature. I would not for anything be the one to change the beautiful innocence of youth in which you live for the grim knowledge of the world which is sure to come to you soon enough; it is a wicked world, dear Countess Elsa!"

"The world of politics?" I asked. Douglas laughed again, and again flushed.

"Yes, of politics," he said, "and of other things."

"And you are going to St. Petersburg in order to set right, if you can, the wrong?" I said.

"What wrong?" asked Douglas, surprised.

"Yes, what wrong?" I repeated; "that is just what I wish to know."

"Do not believe in any wrong, Elsa," he said, very gravely, "until you are forced to believe in it by seeing it for yourself. A great many tales are told by wicked people, interested people, or those who desire to amuse, which are not to be listened to, still less believed. You will hear many things, perhaps, about this Zerbst princess of yours and her husband; do not be too ready to flatter those who spread lying reports, by paying any attention to them."

"There is one in St. Petersburg who writes to my father," I said, "about Court matters. I have overheard my parents consult over his letters and have gathered that the Grand Duchess and the Grand Duke are ill-mated; is this true?"

"It is one of the reports I have just referred to," said Douglas, "as to which it is best to turn a deaf ear."

"Yes, but tell me at least whether there is truth in it," I persisted; not that I really greatly cared to know either one way or the other; but I was determined to be treated by this man as an intelligent being, and not as an ignorant child.

"They did not marry, it may be said, for love," replied Douglas after a pause.

"As all who marry should!" I added, sententiously.

"Certainly," he laughed, "as all who marry should!"

"And you are going to St. Petersburg in order to bring this man and this woman together, is that it?" I continued. Douglas laughed aloud.

"Leave it at that, Elsa," he said, "yes, I am going to do my best to make these good people love one another as they should, having married!"

"Oh, I pray you may succeed!" I ejaculated, with perfect sincerity, "it is so sad that our poor Figchen, I mean Sofie, should be mated to one she does not love; but you never will, Graf; for third parties, I am told, can never do this, and are more likely to widen than to narrow such a breach!"

"But at least I may prevent them actually quarrelling!" he said, still laughing merrily.

"Why you, a stranger to both?" I said.

"Ah!" he replied, more gravely, "now we come to politics and to my mission from the King!"

"Oh!" I said, "then it is the King who is interested in drawing these two together; that is only right, since he was mainly instrumental in bringing about the match, twelve years ago or more—but you had better confess, Graf, that love has no share in this matter, but politics only!"

"You are a witch, Countess Elsa!" he laughed; "you have dragged some of the truth from the bottom of the well, see, you have deserved explanation and you shall have it in so far as it is fitting that you should know of these matters; the Tsarevitch Peter is the admirer and devoted friend of my master, Frederick Maximus, who would be glad that he should remain so until, in the natural course of events, he succeed his aunt, the Empress Elizabeth, upon the throne, she being no friend to my master."

"And what has the Grand Duchess to do with all this," I asked, "and the drawing together of two hearts that have drifted apart?"

"This," said the Count, "that it is desirable, in the King's opinion, that the husband and wife think together in matters political; for your Zerbst princess, that was, is known to be that which we, in England, are wont to call the Grey Mare, which signifies that her will prevails over that of her husband, who is accustomed to think highly of her wisdom, though he is not attracted, personally, by her. As she thinks in the matter of foreign alliances, the Grand Duke is sure to think also, in the end. It is to be my mission to endeavour that both continue to think with one mind, in politics, and with this object to mediate whenever possible in other matters."

It appeared to me that Douglas had undertaken a very amiable though a somewhat hopeless task, and I said so, whereat he laughed and said that since I took so much interest in these great folks I must come over and assist in the good work, "When you are older!" he added.

CHAPTER III.

The last remark took all the honey out of that which preceded it, and I turned from the Count in dudgeon. I did not tell him how dearly I should like to do this very thing, for that I was weary of the narrow life of Zerbst, and of being looked upon as a child, and had, as a matter of fact, fallen desperately in love with himself! I said nothing to Douglas at the time, but once, before he left us, I said that I had thought over his remark as to its being my duty to endeavour to help in the work of bringing together our Zerbst princess and her husband, whose lives seemed to drift apart.

"Oh no," said Douglas, "not duty; your duty lies wherever destiny places you. All I meant was, if you desired a position in the suite of the Grand Duchess, your parents could easily obtain it for you; and once there you might use your influence towards reconciliation; but it is still too early to speak of such things, greatly as I should like to believe that we were destined to meet in Russia."

I said nothing, for I was angry; why must he so constantly refer to my youthfulness? Nevertheless I was determined to do as had been hinted, and when it came to bidding Douglas farewell, next day, I was more resolved than ever that I would somehow attain my end.

My fairy prince, as he had laughingly called himself at our first meeting, had had fashioned, as a gift for myself, a miniature boar in gold, to remind me, he said, of my adventure in the forest—as though I required anything to remind me of that day!—when, as he courteously put it, "your loss, Fraulein Elsa, was my gain, since by your misfortune I gained a friend."

"Oh, and I a dear one also!" I blurted out, and then blushed.

Douglas laughed at this speech, and rode away kissing his hand and smiling; while I, for my part, went and hid myself, because I could do nothing wiser than cry.

Drearily the days went after this; even my long rides, since Fritz was my only companion, cheered me but little. My parents shook their heads over me; they knew well enough what ailed me, for I made no secret of my regret that Douglas had departed; moreover I had entreated my mother to exert herself to obtain for me some such appointment at the Court of the Grand Duchess as Douglas had laughingly suggested to me.

But my mother, though kind and affectionate even in her refusal, bade me wait awhile. A young girl's place, she rightly pointed out, is at her mother's side; and though she would never be one to prevent the young birds flying from the nest as soon as their little wings were strong enough, she would nevertheless not consent to their flitting until she was assured of their power to avoid the claws of the cat.

"What cats do you here speak of, mother?" I asked.

"The Court of the Empress is full of cats for young birds like my little fledgling!" she said. "Nevertheless, you shall fly some day, my bird; for I am not one to believe that evil is to be escaped by hiding oneself."

But very soon events took a turn favourable to my desires for a wider sphere of life than that I enjoyed in narrow Zerbst.

One day when I returned to my supper in the late afternoon a great and joyful surprise was in store for me.

At the table with my father and mother sat he whom of all people—not excepting even my dear parents—I most loved to behold, Count Douglas.

I suppose I blushed deeply, and uttered an exclamation of joy; I know that I restrained myself with difficulty from throwing myself into his arms. Douglas looked pleased and smiled gaily; he took my hand and kissed it.

"Hail, Maid of Honour," he said, "and a long and glorious career to you!"

"Thanks, Herr Graf," I replied, "perhaps my long and glorious career will begin when I am Maid of Honour; such things do not grow at Zerbst."

"Oh, you are wrong!" he laughed. "Did not the Grand Duchess grow at Zerbst? and she will be an Empress! and now it is your turn, who are, indeed, only beginning as Maid of Honour; but it is a good beginning."

"I am not even a Maid of Honour; our Zerbst Duchess is too poor to support such luxuries!" I said, flushing.

"Ah, but her daughter can afford them, and has a mind to add one to her present number of Court ladies," cried Douglas. "In a word, the Grand Duchess has appointed yourself, Fraulein Elsa, if you will accept the post."

"Oh—h!" I exclaimed; my heart leaped into my throat, but my eyes filled with tears the next moment, for I remembered my mother's saying about the young birds and the cats.

"But I am too young," I added; "my parents say so, and you yourself said it." I glanced at my mother at this point; she was smiling radiantly and my father laughed gaily. "What is it, mother," I cried, "am I really to go? Oh! but I cannot leave you!" I ended weakly, a sudden revulsion of filial affection flooding my heart—"I should love to go, but I cannot leave you yet, mother, you and father!"

"But what if we go also?" said my mother, and then the whole truth came out: how that Douglas soon after making acquaintance of the Grand Duchess Catherine had spoken to her of his visit to Zerbst, and of the kindness and hospitality he had received from Count von Adlerberg and his wife.

"Ah! now," said Catherine, on hearing this, "that is interesting indeed; Adlerberg I remember well, a handsome, obstinate man." (We all laughed much at this, for we were well aware that my father's obstinacy—if it existed—lay solely and entirely in his old determination to prefer my dear mother to the little Figchen of old days!) "His wife I remember less," the Grand Duchess had continued, "and the child not at all, save that there was an infant. Is the man still good looking?"

"A splendid man!" Douglas had replied, and as he now related the reply to us, my mother laughed and clapped her hands, and I the same, while father blushed but looked pleased in spite of it.

Then Douglas continued and described how the Grand Duchess had made many other enquiries concerning us, and that in the course of conversation he—the Count—had mentioned that I was anxious to make a career, and longed, if I could obtain an appointment, to become a Maid of Honour in one of the greater Courts."

"Then what Court could be more suitable for a Zerbst girl than our own?" said Catherine. "The Empress will have no objection; his Imperial Highness, my husband, shall not be asked his opinion, or he would say—such is his courtesy that he has little admiration for the Zerbst breed of women. Let her come here; she shall be paid her salary as regularly as there are funds, and that means as regularly as her Majesty deigns to supply them; let her come—and since she is very young, as you say, her parents may bring her. I will not say how long they shall stay, for I am not my own mistress; but they shall stay until they quarrel with my dear husband, which need not occur if only they take care to praise his Holstein soldiers and submit to be cheated by him at cards!"

We all laughed at this speech of the Grand Duchess, as reported by the Count. Afterwards I asked him, in private, how he came to be away from his mission? Had he failed—as would appear from the manner of the Grand Duchess in speaking

of her husband—in his work as mediator?
"Utterly," he said, "so far; but I am
to return to the attack after I have seen
the King and reported that which I have
to impart to him."

"Shall we all return together?" I asked; and Douglas said, to my joy, that my parents had kindly suggested that he should call for us on his way to St. Petersburg from Berlin, and travel with us, he having performed the journey before, and knowing the route.

How well fortune was treating me this day! I went to bed radiantly happy, and dreamed all night of every kind of bliss: love and success and all the sweetest fruits of life fell, like ripe plums, at my feet. Douglas, indeed, had already departed for Berlin; but I should see him again, and all was well, and very well!

Moreover, I saw Douglas again even sooner than I had expected, for while we prepared ourselves for immediate departure as soon as he should call for us after his visit to the King at Berlin, we ourselves were suddenly summoned to his Majesty, who desired to see and confer with my parents before their departure for Russia.

But first our own Duchess sent for us to bid us Godspeed, and was kind enough to say that she hoped the Empress would treat us better than she had treated herself ten years ago, or more, when she had accompanied her daughter Sofie to her future home. But as we all knew very well, for it was a matter of common knowledge, the Empress Elizabeth had at the first shown the greatest kindness to our Duchess, and it was only when the latter had begun to conspire and intrigue, politically, meddling foolishly in matters which did not concern her, that quarrels between herself and the Russian Empress became the order of the day. In these quarrels Elizabeth had utterly routed and vanquished her indiscreet guest, and in the end our poor Duchess had been obliged to leave the country in haste, having been permitted to stay until her daughter was safely married, but no longer; nor had she been invited again to the Russian Court, a lasting grievance to her!

The King had much to say to my parents, they three and Douglas holding many private consultations to which I was not invited. Nevertheless, the King deigned to give even little me an interview and to bid me be circumspect in my conduct at the Court of the Grand Duchess.

"You will learn many things of which you-as a young girl-are now ignorant," he said; "and you will hear of many scandalous things which you are not to believe: they are the fabrications of wicked persons. Serve the Grand Duchess well by refusing to believe ill of her-she has many enemies. Keep your pocketmoney, for it may be scarce while the Empress lives, for she holds the purse and holds it jealously; deserve well of the Grand Duke by reporting to him, through the Count Douglas von Doppelheim, any false and malicious tales that are told of his wife, in order that the Grand Duke may be prepared to defeat the machinations of the wicked."

His Majesty made here the mistake of treating me as a child; he imagined that I should understand this counsel in the sense desired, but as a matter of fact I suspected his design in a moment. He hoped that I should act as a kind of spy upon my mistress. Knowing nothing of politics, or of what was in the King's mind with regard to the relations between these Russian grandees, I could not discern why his Majesty desired this of me, and I replied that I should do my utmost with all my heart to serve the Grand Duchess, my mistress, to the best of my ability.

"That is spoken like an honest German maiden," said the King, "and so long as you do by her as you are convinced is to her true advantage, I shall feel that the Grand Duchess will not lose in having

about her an innocent little counsellor from among her own people."

So that, what with the hint let fall by the King, and the enigmatical explanations of Douglas and my parents, who would tell me no details as to the affairs of the Court to which I was appointed, I was in the position of one who knows nothing but suspects much.

At any rate, I was coming at the invitation of our own Zerbst princess, now Catherine, and her I was determined with all my heart to serve, whatever might be the state of affairs between herself and her husband or between herself and the Empress; and as for spying, that should be the last thing I would do!

What, I thought, if Douglas, being Peter's man, and I, who should be Catherine's partisan, were destined to be opposed to one another, or to be fighting in opposite camps? If the employers should be at issue, the employed must be at issue also. . . . Tush! I concluded, the interests of husband and wife must necessarily be identical. If Douglas serve with whole heart his master, and I as honestly my mistress, we must both work to the same end—their common advantage—and there could be no talk of their employés being at issue.

All of which only went to prove how little I knew about these matters, and not only I-but how little King Frederick knew, or Douglas either. Indeed, we had much to learn, and our education began soon after our arrival at St. Petersburg, which great wooden city we reached in due course, posting through Germany to Memel and Riga, and thence up through Pskoff northwards. I have little recollection of the journey beyond the fact that Douglas was with us. Douglas was with us-and to him fell, frequently, the task of acting as my escort, for, though my parents generally drove in the great travelling carriage drawn by eight post horses, he and I often rode together. Douglas would tell me many tales of the



I knew not what to say, and therefore said nothing, curtseying low.

exploits of his relative, Patrick Gordon, while in the service of the great Tsar Peter, and discourse pleasantly and gaily upon many other subjects besides, but I listened very carelessly; for my soul was steeped in the happiness of being with him and hearing his voice, and I had no leisure but for abandoning myself to the idle joy of being in love.

As to Douglas, I thought he liked me fairly well, but looked upon me as a child and playmate; he appeared to be pleased to be with me, however, and at that I was content perforce to let it rest; for the child must presently grow into the woman, and perhaps then liking would also develop into love. There was no one to make me jealous of him, that, I take it, is the explanation of my blissful state of content at this time. Another maiden to divide his attention, and this same content would soon have flown to the winds of heaven!

For the rest, I was not one of the ill-favoured ones. Our Duchess, at parting, had patted my cheek and said I must beware, for I was of the kind to make her Figchen jealous! Moreover, it had been for years the parrot-cry of all the foolish Zerbst boys and youths, that Elsa had the face of an angel and the heart of a snow-maiden—lord! so I had, for them!

Douglas had not said I was pretty, never once; but I could see in his eyes that he thought it.

CHAPTER IV.

My introduction to the Court of the Grand Duchess was not encouraging. The Grand Duchess was not in the mood, I was told, to see me. She was depressed and inconsolable for the loss of a friend, and would receive no one for a few days.

"Oh, how sad for her Highness!" I exclaimed to Olga Narishkin, my informant. "Is someone dead? Who is it?"

"No one is dead," laughed Olga, "but someone has gone to Poland."

"Oh, well, she will come back and

all will be right again!" I said. Olga laughed all the more.

"When you know her Highness a little better," she said, "you will be aware that the Grand Duchess wastes no tears upon our sex; her friends are all of the other gender. And while we are upon the subject, I will say this, Countess Elsa von Adlerberg, that this Court is no place for young girls of your age and innocence."

"I am sixteen," I said flushing; "and it is time I knew the world."

"Oh, well, then you have come to the right place to study it," said Olga; "but you will learn it here by no easy text-books. Nevertheless, I am sorry for you, and if I had been your mother I should have kept you from this place as from the gates of Hell. If you are wise you will return."

"That I will not!" I said angrily; "and, moreover, it appears to me that if this Court were as evil as you describe it you yourself would not contentedly remain as you do."

"Oh, I am hardened!" said Olga, "and I am ten years your senior—yet even I am shocked sometimes by that which is done in this place."

"Then it is our duty to do what we can to improve matters," I said stoutly.
Olga laughed outright.

"My little innocent," she said, "you have a good heart, and are as pure and guileless as the rays of God's sun, but you do not know what you say; you will find it is dangerous to set yourself in this place against that which is. If that which is does not please us here, we do not see it; we mind our business, and the Grand Duchess minds hers, ay, and the Empress her own also, and the Grand Duke his."

"Does she not make friends of us?" I asked. "Do we never come nearer to her than the servants?"

"On the contrary, she will be all that is kind and gracious; she will know all your secrets, and you will know none of

hers, or-knowing them-you will pretend that you know nothing and see less."

"I shall not do this!" I said; "if I am her friend, I shall be a true friend to her and conceal nothing."

"Then, my pretty innocent," laughed Olga, "I think you are not long for this Court, and that is perhaps all the better for you. Meanwhile, Poniatofsky departed some time since for Poland, and she must have time to weep awhile longer yet before you can be received."

"And who is Poniatofsky?" I asked.

"One whom her Highness can ill spare," said Olga with a grimace, and more than this she would not tell me.

I did not report this conversation to my parents lest they should take fright and remove me homewards before ever I should have tasted the delights of this new and wider sphere of existence. Knowing nothing of the seamy side of life, I had no fear for what I should see and learn here, and Olga's words did not deter me. On the contrary, I felt that if anything were seriously wrong in the life of my mistress, the Grand Duchess, it was my duty, at any personal expense, to stand up to the evil in order to shield my employer from it.

I know now what a little fool I was in all this; but, alas! knowledge and experience of life are among the most expensive of commodities, and must be purchased at the price of many sighs and tears and shocks of shame and heart-burnings—and all this expenditure was still before me.

My parents did not remain long in Russia, and they met with some disappointment in their reception by the Figchen of old days. For the Grand Duchess was distraite and depressed throughout their stay, and though she received them kindly and promised many things on my behalf, yet she made no special effort to be genial and hospitable towards them. My father, she told him, was as handsome as ever, and—she added

with a laugh—"when next you come to see Elsa you may leave Mariechen (my mother) behind!"

A speech which my parents took in good part, though Olga Narishkin informed me afterwards that the Grand Duchess intended it to be taken seriously.

But the Grand Duke Peter had been delighted indeed to see my father and mother, who, in his eyes, possessed the double charm of being Germans and of having come straight from the Court of his "Master," as he loved to call him, Frederick of Prussia. He too promised that I should be well taken care of, and informed my father (for which I took a fancy to the Prince before ever seeing him, though I lost it again at first sight of him) that he thought more of Douglas von Doppelheim and trusted him better, already, "than all the rest of the farmvard."

I remember overhearing my father, after his interview with the Grand Duke, conversing with the English Minister, Williams; and to my parent's remark that his Highness appeared to be a man of original manners, and a quaint personality, the Englishman replied that the Prince was "A strange beast, streaked with insanity."

This same Minister, "Sir Williams" as he was commonly called, left the Court almost immediately after our arrival there. He had done devil's work here, I was afterwards told, and had set going many plots and projects which silently grew and developed after his departure, and were in a way the beginnings, or at least the continuings, of certain matters whose end was tragedy and bloodshed: a deep schemer, this, though doubtless patriotic in his ultimate aims.

So my parents paid but a short visit and returned to Zerbst, leaving me to a destiny which—had they foreseen all—they would never have permitted me to face alone and unprotected.

And here was I, a mere child of six-

teen, an innocent and a novice in the ways of the world, left to float like a little waif upon a very rough sea, that threatened to swallow me up and drown all myinnocence in a moment. My father had committed me very seriously to the care of Douglas, who had as seriously accepted the trust, in so far as circumstances should permit of its fulfilment; and as for me, I felt as safe under his promise as though a regiment of armed troops had been placed at my peculiar service for a body-guard.

As things fell out, I was destined to make acquaintance with the Tsarevitch before being received by the Tsarevna, my mistress, and as my introduction to this Prince was somewhat remarkable, I will describe it in its proper place, which is at this point.

Douglas came to me on the evening after the departure of my parents, who remained but a few weeks, during which period the Grand Duchess had remained inaccessible save for the one short interview which she had accorded them. I was dispirited and sad by reason of my parting with my dear father and mother, and Douglas persuaded me to come over to the Grand Duke's quarters, where his Highness was to receive his friends, and to entertain them with an exhibition of the marionettes of which he was so proud and which he loved to show off to any who would witness the absurd show.

"His Highness may be annoyed if you introduce a stranger!" I said. Douglas answered that Peter was already aware of his intention to bring me, having, indeed, himself suggested that since I might be dull in consequence of my parents' departure and the continued indisposition of the Grand Duchess, I might like to join the company in his own This Grand Duke, clown apartments. and bungler as he was, possessed a kind heart; a matter for which I have always given, and shall always accord him, full credit; he was also obviously attached to Douglas, even now, and for this merit,

also, I am inclined to forgive him many

There was but a small company in the rooms of the Prince. First and foremost there was the Prince himself, who received me in a peculiar manner, first stuffing his tongue in his cheek and then whistling as Douglas introduced me by name.

"Whew!" he said; "she's pretty!"

A common-looking woman at his elbow, plain and unattractive, made a grimace and said something about "babes at Court," which I did not entirely catch, though I gathered that she had referred to myself as an infant, and I therefore felt immediate resentment against her—whoever she might be.

The Grand Duke put his tongue out at this lady and chucked me under the chin —I was painfully surprised and taken aback by his conduct. "Yes," he said, "you are a very pretty child—never mind what old Lizooshka says, she is easily mide jealous!"

I knew not what to say, and therefore said nothing, curtseying low in default of speech, and wishing myself well out of the presence of these people.

"You will enjoy my marionettes," continued the Grand Duke, "and you have come on a good day, for there is to be a special function. The Grand Duchess is absent, charming Fraulein, but this lady, Countess Lizooshka Vorontsova, you will find an excellent substitute; she plays the Grand Duchess with the best—nicht wahr Lizooshka?"

"The child will think you a fool, Highness," said the Vorontsova, dragging at the arm of the Prince. "Come away and let us finish this marionette foolery and get to supper."

The Prince made a grimace at me and departed behind a curtain which concealed, as I rightly supposed, his stage arrangements; and there I partly overheard Lizooshka scolding and him laughing and replying, though what they said I did not catch. The Grand Duke's ap-

pearance and conduct disappointed and disenchanted me sorely. He was a clumsily built man, rather tall than short, but badly susammen gesetst, as we should say; he had, too, an uninteresting, dissipated face, considerably marked by small-pox.

Douglas drew me back among the scanty audience already seated to view the show. He noticed, I suppose, my expression of disenchantment, for he smiled and said:

"We must not always judge by appearances, Elsa; the Prince has a good heart, though he assumes a foolish and unprincely manner."

"He to sit on the highest throne in Europe!" I muttered,—"and your master!" I added.

Douglas laughed, but I thought he smothered a sigh. "It is the weak ones

who require the strongest helpers!" he said.

"And who is the Vorontsova?" I asked.

Douglas was grave in a moment, and flushed red; he hesitated before replying.

"Oh, one of the Court ladies," he said at length.

"She is plain and common-looking," I continued, "but the Grand Duke appears to think highly of her."

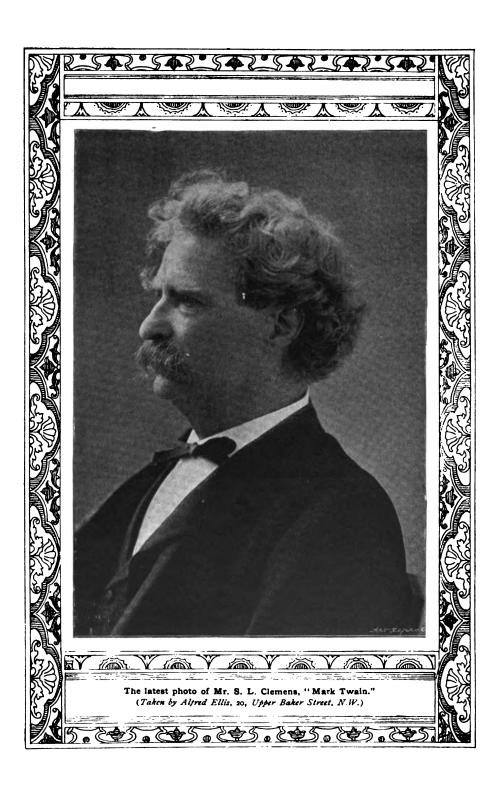
"No doubt;" said Douglas shortly.

"Perhaps for her intellectual qualities?" I persisted. Douglas turned sharply round upon me.

"Countess Elsa," he said very gravely,
"as your guardian, I would recommend
you to see as little as possible of this
person and to conjecture less. I do not
like her."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]





SAMUEL L. CLEMENS, "MARK TWAIN.

A CHARACTER SKETCH BY ROBERT BARR.

WITH A REPRODUCTION OF MARK TWAIN'S LATEST PORTRAIT.



HE world loves a label. It likes to classify its men and things, docket them, and arrange them nicely on its shelves, each in the proper place. This habit probably

arises from the fact that, ever since the indiscretion of Adam, mankind has been compelled to make a living, and has found through long practice that method in business leads to success; therefore man has become a labelling animal, so inured to the vice that he carries it into provinces where it does not legitimately belong. Sometimes there drifts across the sea of life a man whom the world cannot fit into any of its pre-arranged pigeon-holes, and him it either ignores or turns upon and rends, perhaps clucifying The person who interferes with him. these labels is never popular, and is usually howled down when he tries to show that William Tell never existed, or that William Shakespeare's works were written by Bacon, or that Nero was a just and humane monarch, or that Solomon couldn't have been so wise as reported. otherwise he would not have been so frequently married. Therefore I expect little sympathy from the intelligent reader when I detach from Mark Twain the card with the word "humorist" written upon it in large characters, and venture to consider the man uninfluenced by the readymade verdict of the label.

I do not know whether this magazine has reproduced the photograph of Mark Twain which I have before me as I write:*

the one taken by Alfred Ellis, which is, I believe, the latest; but if not, another will do as well, and I invite the reader's critical attention to it. Any portrait of Mark Twain shows a strong face, worthy of serious study. The broad, intellectual brow, the commanding, penetrating eye, the firm, well-moulded chin, give the world assurance of a man. Recently I had an opportunity of getting an opinion on this photograph; an opinion unbiassed by the label. I was travelling through France, and on the train made the acquaintance of a silk manufacturer of Lyons, who was as well versed in men and their affairs as he was ignorant of books. Nevertheless, I was amazed to learn that he had never heard of Mark Twain, and, as I had merely mentioned the name, giving him no indication of what it signified, I took the photograph from my pocket, and handed it to the Frenchman.

"That is a good representation of h.m," I said, "and as you have seen most of the great personages of Europe, tell n.e what this man is."

He gazed intently at the picture for a few moments; then spoke: "I should say he was a statesman."

"Supposing you are wrong in that, what would be your next guess?"

"If he is not a maker of history, he is perhaps a writer of it; a great historian, probably. Of course, it is impossible for me to guess accurately except by accident, but I use the adjective because I am convinced that this man is great in his line, whatever it is. If he makes silk, he makes the best silk."

"You couldn't improve on that if you tried a year. You have summed him up in your last sentence."

I am convinced that in Samuel L. Clemens America has lost one of its greatest statesmen; one of its most notable Presidents. If he had been born a little earlier, and if the storm-centre of politics had been whirling a little farther to the west forty years ago, it is quite conceivable that to-day we should be reverencing President Samuel Clemens as the man who, with firm hand on the tiller, steered his country successfully through the turbulent rapids that lay ahead of it, and that we might have known Abraham Lincoln only as a teller of funny stories. In this lies the glory of America, that in every State, perhaps in every county, we have an Abraham Lincoln, or a U.S. Grant, ready to act their parts, silently, honestly, and modestly, when grim necessity brushes aside the blatant incompetents whom, with a careless, optimistic confidence, we ordinarily The world has put into high places. now, without a single dissenting voice, elevated Lincoln to the highest pedestal a statesman can attain; but the world has a short memory, and it forgets that at the first it strove with equal unanimity, East and West, on the continent of America no less than on the continent of Europe, to place the label "clown" on his back. I saw the other day a book of cartoons on the great President, taken from American and European sources, which strike the modern eye as little short of blasphemous. However, the paste never got time to dry, and the label did not stick.

Mr. Clemens was hardly so fortunate. In early life he conjured up the cap and bells, and the bells jingled a merry, golden tune. And now when he attempts to do a serious piece of work the bells ring as they used to do in that sombre play which Henry Irving has placed so effectively before us. Yet Fate made some effort to save Mark Twain from this canorous

shadowing. The publishers had Innocents Abroad all set up, printed, and bound for nearly two years, but were afraid to issue it, thinking it might not be popular, so different was it from anything they had ever seen before. It came forth at last practically under compulsion, for the indignant author gave them, in a telegraph message, the choice of publishing the book or appearing before the law courts. They took the former alternative, and the instant success of the volume stamped Mark Twain as the humorist of America, if not of the world. Thus it comes about that all of the multitudinous articles which have appeared since then about the writer of this book have treated of him entirely as the funny man, and have ignored the fact that he has eminent qualities which are no less worthy of consideration.

I think I may claim with truth that I know Mr. Clemens somewhat intimately, and I have no hesitation in saying that, although I have as keen an appreciation of humour as the next man, humour is merely a small part of his mental equipment, perhaps the smallest part. You have but to look at the man to realise His face is the face of a Bismarck. I have always regarded him as the typical American, if there is such a person. ever the eyes and the beak of the American eagle were placed into and on a man's face, Samuel L. Clemens is that man. In the first published description of him, written more than thirty years ago, Dr. Hing-"His eyes are light and ston says, twinkling." In the most recent article, Mr. Stead says, "His eyes are grey and kindly-looking." They are kindly-looking, for the man himself is kindly, and naturally his eyes give some index of this; but their eagle-like, searching, penetrating quality seems to me their striking peculiarity. They are eyes that look into the future that can read a man through and through. I should hate to do anything particularly mean and then have to meet the eyes of Mark Twain. I know I should be found out.

It is an achievement for a man once labelled to meet success outside of what the public consider to be his line. This Mark Twain has done. The Prince and the Pauper is certainly one of the very best historical novels that ever was written, and if it had not appeared, son.e popular books which might be mentioned would not now be in existence. Joan of Arc has been hailed by several of the most distinguished critics of Europe as a distinct gain to the serious literature of this country, In A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur the author ran counter, not only to his own label, but to a labelled section of history. The age of Arthur has been labelled "sentimental," and the iconoclast who stirred it up with the inflexible crowbar of fact, and showed under what hard and revolting conditions the ordinary man then existed, naturally brought upon himself the censure of the Slaves of the Label. But these are three books which, aside from their intrinsic interest, cause a man to think; and I hope that some day Mr. Clemens will turn his attention to American history and give us a volume or two which will be illuminating.

There is a popular idea that Mark Twain is an indolent man; but, as a matter of fact, I never knew one who was so indomitably industrious. As he has said to me on more than one occasion, no man is indolent on a subject that absorbingly concerns him, and in his writing Mark Twain is indefatigable, destroying more manuscript that does not entirely satisfy him than probably any other writer. His endeavour is to get his sentences as perfect as possible when first written, and not to depend on after correction, either in manuscript or proof. In the construction of the sentence, in the careful selection of the exact word, he has the genius that consists in taking infinite pains. In theory he labours each day from eleven to four or half-past,

and is content if he achieves 1,800 words; but in practice he is apt to work on and on unless somebody drags him away from his task, so completely does he lose himself in what he is doing. On several occasions, when living near him on the continent of Europe, I have acted as his quitting-bell, and called in on him when it was time for him to cease working, so that we might take our pre-arranged walk together; but whether I interrupted him at four, or at five, or at six, or at seven, he generally said, "Is time up already? Just let me finish this sentence, and I'll be with you." Then, when he had forgotten mc, I had usually to upset a chair or fall over a sofa to recall myself to his attention. entirely alone, he would break the record as far as a day's work is concerned. He cannot dictate, nor does he use a typewriter; a fountain-pen is his utmost concession to modernity. His handwriting is as legible as print, and he invariably uses note paper, which he tears off, sheet after sheet, after about 150 words have been written to the page.

Mr. Clemens is a most kindly man, and I have been amazed at the amount of time he wastes in writing letters of counsel or encouragement to utter strangers, who have the brazen cheek to make this or that demand upon his energies; but as I was once one of those strangers myself, I cannot censure this practice with the emphasis it undoubtedly deserves—I am handicapped by my own guilt. As an instance of this, or perhaps I should say, as six instances, I now give some account of how he has obtained places for young men who desired to become journalists, and who wrote to him invoking his aid in the furtherance of that ambition.

MARK TWAIN'S "SYSTEM" FOR FINDING EMPLOYMENT.

The strong common-sense of Mr. Clemens must have struck everyone who has been brought into contact with him,

and I think the facts I here set down are proof of this faculty. It seems to me that his advice to would-be reporters is so good that it is a pity it should be given to individuals rather than to the general public, for it applies not to journalism alone, but to every department of effort. At the time the incidents were related to me, I put them down in my note-book and I have endeavoured to reproduce them as nearly as may be in Mr. Clemens's own words. Happily there is no time before this article appears to submit a proof to him, and so I cannot guarantee absolute accuracy; but on the other hand. I run no risk of having it vetoed and thus lost to the world; and in apologising to him, I beg to add the time-honoured formula of journalism, that our columns are open to him should he desire to make any correction.

Mr. Clemens invented a "system" once; perhaps one might be allowed to call it a philosophy.

It was thirty-five years ago. He and Jim were cabin-mates in a new silvermining camp away off in a corner of Nevada. They had spent weeks in vain prospecting; their money was about out; they found themselves compelled to throw their tools aside for a while and hunt up a salaried situation of one kind or another. When I say "they," I mean Jim; for he was of powerful build and stood a chance, whereas his partner was feeble and stood none. Jim went over into the valley where the quartz mills were, and tried to get a situation, but there was not a vacancy of any kind. Things looked dark for them. They sat around many hours, gloomily brooding and thinking. Then necessity, the mother of invention. came suddenly and unexpectedly to the help of the weaker comrade. A scheme was born to Clemens, a scheme founded upon a common foible of our human nature. He believed it would work, but thought he would not expose it to criticism and almost certain derision until he

had privately tested it. Clemens said to]im:

"Which mill would you rather have a situation in?"

"Oh, the Morning Star, of course; but they are full; there wasn't the least show there; I knew it before I went."

"Very well, I will go and see if they will give me a place. When I get it I will turn it over to you."

It was a sad time, but Jim almost smiled at the idea. He said:

"When you get it. It was well to put that in. If they've no place for me, what do you suppose they want with an arrested development like you?"

Jim was surprised when Clemens started. He had not supposed that his partner was in earnest.

Clemens arrived and asked the foreman for work. It would have been natural for the foreman to laugh, but he was not the laughing sort. He said promptly:

"All full!" and was turning away, but the young man said:

"I know that, but if you will let me tell you"—and Clemens went on and told him the project. He listened, a little impatiently at first, then tolerantly, and finally sympathetically—yes, with even a distinct friendliness in his eye. When the youth had finished, the foreman said:

"All right, my boy. It is a queer notion, and rather unusual, I must say. Still, it's your own proposition, and if you are satisfied with it, shed your coat and begin."

At the end of a week Clemens was back at the cabin, pretty well worn out. Jim said:

"Why, how you look! What have you been doing?"

"Screening sand, sorting ore, feeding batteries, cleaning up amalgam, charging the pans, firing the retorts—oh, everything."

"Is that so? Did they give you a situation?"

" Yes."

- "No!"
- "Yes."
- "What mill?"
- "The Morning Star."
- "What a lie."
- "It isn't. It's true. And I've arranged for you to take my place Monday. Steady situation as long as you like. And you'll get wages, too. I didn't."

The closing remark discloses the magic secret of Clemens's "system," and he has worked the scheme many times since. Compressed into a sentence, the gospel of this system is this: Almost any man will give you a situation if you are willing to work for nothing; the salary will follow presently; you have only to wait a little, and be patient.

This plan floated Clemens into journalism; then into book-making, and other diversions followed. After a while, candidates for places on the daily press and for admission to the magazines began to apply to him for help. This was in 1870. They wanted him to use his "influence." It was a pleasant phrase, "influence"and debauched his honesty. He could not bring himself to come out and acknowledge that he hadn't any, so he did what all the new hands do: wrote notes of introduction and recommendation to editors, although he knew that the focus of an editor's literary judgment could not be altered by such futilities. His notes accomplished nothing, so he reformed and stopped writing them.

HOW THE "SYSTEM" HAS WORKED.

But the applications did not cease. Then the "system" tested eight years before, in the mines, suggested itself, and he thought he would try it on these people. His first patient was a young stranger out West. He was blazingly anxious to become a journalist, and believed he had the proper stuff in him for the vocation; but he said he had no friends and no influence, and all his

efforts to get work on newspapers had failed. He asked only the most moderate wages, yet he was always promptly snubbed, and could get no editor to listen to him. Clemens thought out a sermon for that young fellow, and in substance it was to this effect:—

Your project is unfair. The physician, the clergyman, the lawyer, the teacher, the architect, the sculptor, the painter, the engineer, all spend years and money in fitting themselves for their several professions, and none of them expects to be paid a penny for his services until his long apprenticeship is finished and his competency established. It is the same with the humbler trades. If you should go, equipped with your splendid ignorance, to the carpenter, or the tinner, or the shoemaker, and ask for a situation and wages, you would frighten those people; they would take you for a lunatic. And you would take me for a lunatic, if I should suggest that you go to them with such a proposition. Then why should you have the effrontery to ask an editor for employment and wages when you have served no apprenticeship to the trade of writing? And yet you are hardly to blame, for you have the rest of the world with you. It is a common superstition that a pen is a thing which-

However, never mind the rest; you get the idea. It was probably a good enough sermon, but Mr. Clemens has the impression that he did not send it. He did send a note, however, and it was to this effect:

"If you will obey my instructions strictly, I will get you a situation on a daily newspaper. You may select the paper yourself; also the city and State."

This note made the receiver glad. It made his heart bound. You could see it in his answer. It was the first time he had run across a Simon-pure benefactor of the old school. He promised, on honour, and gratefully, that whatever the instructions might be he would not swerve

from them a hair's breadth. And he named the journal of his choice. He chose high, too, but that was a good sign. Mr. Clemens framed the instructions and sent them, although he had an idea that they might disappoint the applicant a little, but nothing was said about that.

Formula: (1) By a beneficent law of our human nature, every man is ready and willing to employ any young fellow who is honestly anxious to work—for nothing.

(2) A man once "wonted" to an employee and satisfied with him, is loath to part with him and give himself the trouble of breaking in a new man.

Let us practice upon these foibles.

Instructions: (1) You are to apply for work at the office of your choice.

- (2) You are to go without recommendations. You are not to mention my name, nor anyone's but your own.
- (3) You are to say that you want no pay. That all you want is work; any kind of work—you make no stipulation; you are ready to sweep out, point the pencils, replenish the inkstands, hold copy, tidy up, keep the place in order, run errands—anything and everything; you are not particular. You are so tired of being idle that life is a burden to you; all you want is work and plenty of it. You do not want a pennyworth of remuneration. N.B.—You will get the place, whether the man be a generous one or a selfish one.
- (4) You must not sit around and wait for the staff to find work for you to do. You must keep watch and find it for yourself. When you can't find it, invent it. You will be popular there pretty soon, and the boys will do you a good turn whenever they can. When you are on the street and see a thing that is worth reporting, go to the office and tell about it. By-and-by you will be allowed to put such things on paper yourself. In the morning you will notice that they have been edited, and a good many of your

words left out—the very strongest and best ones, too. That wil teach you to modify yourself. In due course you will drift by natural and sure degrees into daily and regular reporting, and will find yourself on the city editor's staff, without anyone's quite knowing how or when you got there.

- (5) By this time you have become necessary; possibly even indispensable. Still, you are never to mention wages. That is a matter which will take care of itself; you must wait. By-and-by there will be a vacancy on a neighbouring paper. You will know all the reporters in town by this time, and one or another of them will speak of you and you will be offered the place, at current wages. You will report this good fortune to your city editor, and he will offer you the same wages, and you will stay where you are.
- (6) Subsequently, whenever higher pay is offered you on another paper, you are not to take the place if your original employer is willing to keep you at a like price.

These instructions were probably not quite what the young fellow was expecting, but he kept his word, and obeyed them to the letter. He applied for the situation, and got it without trouble. He kept his adviser acquainted with the steps of his progress. He began in the general utility line, and moved along up. Within a month he was on the city editor's staff. Within another month he was offered a place on another paper-with wages. His own employers "called the hand," and he remained where he was. the next four years his salary was twice raised by the same process. Then he was given the berth of chief editor on a great daily down South, and there he still was when Mr. Clemens last heard of him.

His next patient was another stranger who wanted to try journalism and could not get an opening. He was very much gratified when he was told to choose his paper and he would be given a situation on it. He was less gratified when he learned the terms. Still, he carried them out, got the place he wanted, and has been a reporter ever since.

The third patient followed the rules, and at the end of a month was made a sort of assistant editor of the paper, and he was also put under wages without his asking it: not high wages, for it was not a rich or prominent paper, but as good as he was. Six months later he was offered worth. the chief editorship of a new daily in another town—a paper to be conducted by a chairman and directors-moneyed, arrogant, small-fry politicians. Mr. Clemens told him he was too meek a creature for the place: that he would be bundled out of it without apology in three months, and tried to persuade him to stay where he was, and where his employment would be permanent; but the glory of a chief editorship was too dazzling, the salary was extravagant, and he went to his doom. He lasted less than three months, and was then hustled out with contumely. That was twenty years ago. His spirit was wounded to the death probably, for he has never applied for a place since, and has never had one of any kind.

The fourth candidate was a stranger. He obeyed the rules, got the place he named, became a good reporter and very popular, was presently put under a good salary voluntarily, and remained at his post a year. Then he disappeared, greatly regretted. His creditors will lynch him when they get him. Or maybe they will

elect him mayor; there are enough of them to make it unanimous.

The fifth man followed the rules, and went up and up till he became chief editor, then down and down until he became a lawyer.

No. 6 was a fine success. He chose his paper, and followed the rules strictly. In fifteen years he has climbed from a general utility youth to the top, and is now chief leader writer on one of the most widely known and successful daily journals in the world. He has never served any but the one employer. The same man pays his large salary to-day who took him, an unknown youth at nothing-and-find-himself, fifteen years ago.

These are genuine cases, and Mr. Clemens stated them truthfully. There are others, but these are enough to show that the "system" is a practical one and is soundly based.

And not uncomplimentarily based, for I think it is fair to assume that its real strength does not lie so much in man's selfish disposition to get something for nothing, as in his inability to rebuff with an ungenerous "no" a young fellow who is asking a wholly harmless and unexacting favour of him.

Since the system has succeeded so well in finding openings in journalism, it may perhaps be trusted to open a way into nearly any calling in the list of industries. So it is offered with confidence to young men and women who want situations and are without friends and influence.





Scotch Minister (to small boy who has been fighting). - "Ah, laddie, think what wad hae bin done ac ye and ye had kilt that laddie!"

Small Boy .- "I'd a bin had up."

Minister.—" Ah, yes, ye'd a bin had up, but something waur than that. Small Boy.—" I'd a be' hung, mebbie."

Minister.—"Yes! but something waur than that wad a happen'd."

Small Boy.—" After that I'd a bin pit in a waxwork!"

THE FAILURE OF MARTHA MORRIS.

BY JOHN FOSTER FRASER.

ILLUSTRATED BY S. H. VEDDER.



OBODY has ever been known to say a good word for the men of Trentborough. Rarely, indeed, have the men of Trentborough ever been heard to say a good

word for each other.

Everyone knows everyone else in the old town. When Bob Wright, the grocer, bought some of the new houses down the Ropery, the merits of his purchase were discussed in the bar parlour of the White Deer. When young Wiggins met Betsy Haverhill one Sunday night as she came

out from the Wesleyan Chapel, and walked with her homewards, all Trent-borough smiled, and said it was just what had been expected.

When one of the little tradesmen failed they could tell you in the White Deer what was the cause of his failure, who had been giving long credit, and who "ud cum a cropper."

And when old Martha Morris, who kept a little shop at the corner of the lane that turns down by the side of the Church, put up the green shutters, and a meeting of creditors was called, there would have been



Martha Morris had always been unfortunate.

the usual talk had not something strange occurred.

Martha Morris had always been unfortunate. Her man died, and left her So she sold some of her furninothing. ture, and some friends lent her money, and she opened the shop, with the bulleye chunks of glass as windows. She sold slates and slate pencils to the children who went to the Church school. Sometimes she sold coloured wool to the girls to make mats on the Friday afternoon. few of the local journals were always on her counter, and some note-paper in penny packets, and cotton and worsted. Birthday cards she kept in a drawer with pen-holders, cheap combs, and many little oddments such as the people of Trentborough might require.

She was a little shrivelled woman, with narrow shoulders, and had the air of one who meekly accepted fate, and thought it no use to battle against its decrees.

When a big shop near the Market Place commenced to sell the same articles as she did, her trade disappeared. Besides, her shop was shabby, and her things were old and faded, and sometimes dusty. The other shop had two big windows, and the things looked newer and brighter than hers, and often they were cheaper.

And thus it was that Martha Morris put up her shutters one forenoon, just before the children came tumbling and screaming and laughing out of the school-house. young man from the lawyer's office had been writing out a list of all she had: furniture, the two chairs that belonged to her grandmother, the kitchen table, a vase with some worked woollen lilies under a glass case, the dull-ticking, brass-faced old clock, even a cracked china cup and saucer that were given her by her mother on her wedding day. The value of the lot was computed by the young man to be £15 14s. od., and her liabilities were $f_{,27}$ 4s. or thereabouts. For she could not remember if she had paid for the

coals that stood in a shed at the back of the decrepit shop.

It was a warm, heavy-atmosphered afternoon, with humid air from the marshes across the river hanging over the town, when the few creditors to whom Martha Morris was indebted met to decide upon selling her up, or "winding up the estate," as Lawyer Spencer termed it.

The meeting had been called for four At three o'clock Martha was ready, although the walk from her shop to the office of the lawyer was little more than five minutes. But after she had washed the plate, and wiped the knife and fork after her dinner, she put on the old black bonnet, and the old black cloak, worn time out of mind in summer and in winter. She preferred, however, to wear them on dull days, for then the sun, with its fierce light, did not show that the lace on her bonnet was fading to a brown, and that the cloak was shabby and polished in places, and frayed at the edges.

But to-day she put them on, having no preference. She sat down in her little kitchen, and folded her cotton-gloved hands in her lap. She looked round on her little possessions, so soon to be wrenched from her.

She was a woman with no spirit, and the near prospect of the workhouse did not distress her.

"What hes ter be, mun be!" was the substance of her philosophy.

The old cat dozed and purred on the hearthrug made with snippets of cloth collected during long years.

The buzz of the children in the infant school close by, m-a-t, mat, ca-t, cat, d-o-g, dog, recited in unison, floated in through the open window, while Martha sat listening to the dull click of the clock, and watched the second hand jerk round, and round, and round, while the minute hand sank slowly to the half-hour, and then climbed slowly towards the hour.

She went out into the hot street.

Nobody was about. But the rumble of a cart over the rough cobble stones could be heard some distance away. She turned and crossed the Market Place that was bathed in sunshine, and had an old cannon, the prize of one of the wars, standing in the centre.

The principal shops of Trentborough are in the Market Place, but not a soul was out this drowsy, sensuous afternoon, save a nursemaid, with red cheeks and an ill-fitting dress that dragged at the heel, who was lazily pushing a perambulator.

· The lawyer's office was up a narrow passage, that stood between an ironmonger's and a chemist's, and then up a narrow, steep flight of stairs. The walls were covered with posters announcing sales by auction, sometimes of houses, generally of farming implements and horses. Lawyer Spencer's name was in big letters at the bottom of each poster as "solicitor to the vendors" or "solicitor to the trustees." Many of the posters were old, the sales having taken place months and even years ago. But they were never pulled down. They gave one the idea that Mr. Spencer was a man with a widespread connection.

When Martha Morris tapped at the door and went into the little office, with a green baize-covered table at one side, where sat the lawyer with a bundle of official documents before him, her heart beat quickly, for she felt a slight tremor.

She knew all the creditors, plain spoken but rather slow-witted men, who wanted their twenty shillings in the pound. There was Master Tuckwell, who supplied all the little shopkeepers in the surrounding villages with goods. He was the largest creditor, and one of the local preachers at the Methodist Chapel—a hard man, who never gave more than thirty-six inches to the yard, and asked himself for thirty-seven.

Amos Atkin, a stout old gentleman with a round face, came to look after his rent. Bill Needham, the elder, supposed he could get back the gross of slates he had supplied to the widow. Catsby, the haberdasher, who advanced Martha a few shillings' worth of pencils and ink-bottles and blotting-paper, loudly complained against her not discovering her position before, while Walter Horton, son of the coal merchant, said it was no good squabbling, for the poor old woman had probably been hard enough pushed without them making it worse for her.

And it was at this point that Mrs. Morris tapped gently at the door, and stepped hesitatingly into the room.

"Sit down, please," said the lawyer.

Martha looked round and could not make up her mind which of the three empty chairs she should take.

"Maybe ye'll just sit down, Mrs. Morris," said Amos Atkin; "its warm walkin' ter day."

"Yes, sir, it is," said Martha, taking the chair nearest the door.

She felt slightly overawed.

Amos Atkin blew out his cheeks, for he was hot. Master Tuckwell beat a tattoo with his fingers on the table edge.

"Business hesn't been so fust rate wi' yer, Mrs. Morris?" said young Horton, by way of breaking the dead silence which fell on the little meeting.

"No, sir, it ain't; not so fust rate as I mi't wish."

"Ah, just so!" said Tuckwell, looking hard at the widow, as though he was going to make a further remark. But he turned his gaze out of the window.

"Maybe you've been knawin' ye was in trouble for a long time?" put in the haberdasher, twirling the ends of his little black beard.

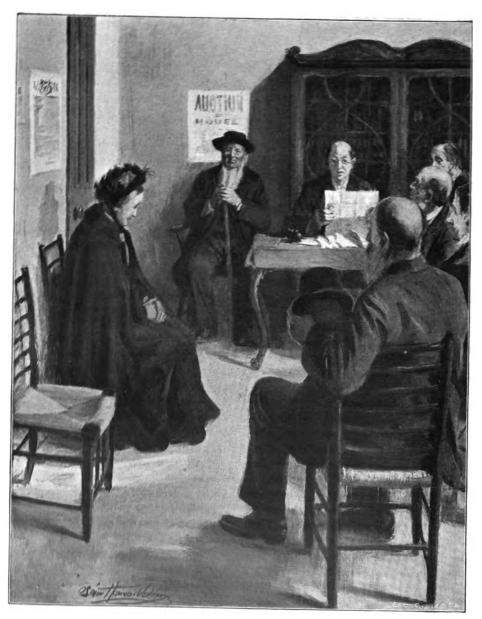
"Yis, sir, I've known on it fur a long time, but I've allus hoped—allus hoped."

"Ah, just so!" repeated Tuckwell.

"But 'opin' an' not payin' ain't much good in business, Mrs. Morris," added Catsby.

"No, sir, it ain't that."

Lawyer Spencer looked up from his



She felt slightly overawed.

papers with a slight frown. He was a clean-shaven, bald man, with a hurried manner. "We had better not commence in an informal way," he said. "This is the case of Martha Morris, of Church Lane, in the parish of All Saints, Trentborough, widow. The debtor filed her own petition. The liabilities are put down at £,27 odd, though I believe they will rank more, and the assets are estimated to realise something about £15. The debtor, I believe, has no offer to make. The best plan would be to have Mrs. Martha Morris adjudicated bankrupt. If you please, choose one of your number to act with me to wind up the estate, and after the necessary expenses have been paid the remainder will be divided in accordance with the Act. All who are of this opinion kindly signify the same by-"

"Ain't yer goin' just a bit too fast, Mester Spencer?" said Amos Atkin, edging forward so that he sat quite on the edge of his chair. "Now, I'm what I think yer call a preferent'al creditor, ain't I, 'cause I'm th' landlord, an' hev th' fust bite?"

"Ha!" puffed Needham, rubbing his hand up the side of his unshaven cheek.
"I dunno as anybody oughter hev any preference like 'ere, an' least o' all Mester Atkin theer, whose better able ter lose than——"

"Quite right, quite right, Mr. Atkin," interposed the lawyer, placing the palms of his hands together. "You are technically correct. I had that in mind."

"But 'ow abaat my slates?" questioned Needham. "Can't I get 'em back, fur I think most of 'em's still at Mrs. Morris's shop?"

"I'm afraid not! no, I'm afraid not. They will have to be sold, and the proceeds will be properly administered."

"Ay," argued Needham, "but when that's been done, an' you've 'ed your pull, and Mester Atkin 'ere hes hed 'is, there waint be much worth th' pickin'."

"I merely state the law," said Mr. Spencer, jerking his pen into the inkbottle.

"Oh, hang th' law! "What I wants is justice."

The lawyer made no reply. For a few moments his pen scratched over the paper, while the afternoon sun streamed in through the little square panes, lighting up the shabby attire and the pale, parchment-like features of Martha Morris.

"I suppose I am right, Mrs. Morris, in saying you have no offer to make?" said the lawyer, looking up.

"I dunno what ter say, sir."

"I mean you have no proposition to make so that these proceedings may be suspended with the prospect of you ultimately clearing off your indebtedness?"

"No, sir, I ain't."

"Then, gentlemen, if you are all agreed we may—"

"I'm thinkin', Mrs. Morris," said Tuckwell, the local preacher, "that yer goes to the Parish Church?"

"Yes, sir—sometimes!"

"Ah, just so!" and he began tapping his fingers with rather more energy.

"Well, so do I!" said Needham, who, having had his temper ruffled, was prepared to quarrel with somebody. "So do I, but I doan't see as 'ow that's got owt ter do wit."

"I think," replied Tuckwell, "I'm entitled ter ask Mrs. Morris some questions. Ain't that so, lawyer?"

"Of course, of course; any questions that may throw a light on how the insolvency was brought about."

"Well, you fire ahead, Tuckwell," said Needham, sticking his arms as far as they would go in his breeches-pocket, and stretching his legs out straight, "go ahead, an' you bully-rag th' 'owd wumman, an' we'll wait till you've done."

"Then yer mi't tell us, Mrs. Morris," said Tuckwell, unheeding the remonstrance, "'ow much you've been mekin' these last few months like."

"Sometimes one thing, sometimes another, Mester Tuckwell," said Martha Morris in her thin cracked voice. "Sometimes I've made as much as thi'teen shillin' an' sometimes nobbut much abuv seven."

"Ah! just so. Yer niver tho't o' 'plyin' ter Church folks?"

"No, sir. I was niver exackly wi'out sup i' th' 'ouse."

"But yer knew as how yer was livin' on yer capital."

"Yis, sir, I'll not be denyin' that. But I soort o' 'spected thing's 'ud work round, an' they didn't."

"An'—an' what d'ye expec' ter do now?"

"I suppose's I'll hev ter go i' th' Union," she replied.

"Just so! "Hev' ye—do yer feel an objection like ter go i' th' Union?"

"I dunno, sir. If I hes ter go I suppose I hes ter go."

"Ah! How long hev yer lived i' Trentboro', Mrs. Morris?"

"I wor born i' th' White Hoss yard that wor seventy year sin come next October mart."

"Ah!"

The local preacher's fingers once more began tapping while the man looked thoughtfully beyond the window. Needham was fidgety, and kept throwing one leg over the other. He was indignant at Tuckwell's cross-questioning. Amos Atkin was mildly indignant also, but his indignation took the form of blowing out his cheeks. Catsby, the hairdresser, pulled at individual hairs in his stunted beard, and then he tugged at the buttons of his coat as though he would pull them off. Young Horton leaned forward with his elbows on his knee making up his mind what had best be done.

The lawyer busily scribbled a letter.

Martha Morris kept her glance on the floor. Had she been a woman of any energy, any initiative, or had there been any cunning about her, she might have wept and pleaded her trials, told the story of her want, and even reminded Amos Atkin of the time when he was a tall young man and she was a bright-cheeked girl, and—but that was a long time ago, fifty years at least, and he had men sons now and grandchildren.

So she said nothing, but sat quietly with her hands in her lap. She knew how it would all end. She had known it for months. She felt she would be glad when it was all over, and she could go to the Union.

The rays of the sun left the woman's face, and crept with slow and lessened radiance along the wall.

"Well, gentlemen, what shall it be—what shall we do?" questioned the lawyer.

No one made a reply. The rough men began to feel ashamed—not of their action against the widow—but of a sentiment which sprang up in each of their breasts. To be thought weak, to waver in anything, was merely to hold themselves up to contempt.

Not a man liked to say what was in his mind for fear of the others.

Tuckwell, the general dealer, the local preacher, the man with the tight-cornered lips—who had never been heard to say a kind word in his life—was the first to speak.

"I'm thinkin," he said, "as 'ow, personally, I'm in no great heed for th' money as Mrs. Morris owes. I doant mind lettin' th' debt stan' a bit longer. I' course—that is—I knaws Mrs. Morris 'll pay when she's i' funds."

Once more he tapped his short fingers; he spoke as though he were addressing a couple of sparro ws chirruping and quarrelling on the tree by the window.

"Well, I doant objec' confessin' summat like that wor i' my own mind," said young Horton confusedly.

"An' inaybe—maybe I'd get more fur my slates if we worn't ovver pressin' like," remarked the unshaven Bill Needham "Money's no' ter be slipped by, but then 'es yer says——"

"Mrs. Morris," said Catsby, the haberdasher, speaking dubiously, "mi't tell us when she'd expec' ter make hersen clear like."

"I dunno, sirs," replied the woman.
"I'm old, an' can't get abaat much, an'
my things ain't o' the fust class, an' since
th' big shop's opened few folks cum near
me, an'—an' there's no tellin' as I'd ever be
able ter pay. Maybe I'd only get farther
i' th' mire like. I dunno what ter say."

Again there was silence in the room, but the shouts and hallooing of children released from school could be heard as they scampered along the street on their way home.

The cheeks of Amos Atkin were blown out to their fullest extent. His eyes bulged forward, and his fat hands played nervously with his heavy silver watchguard.

"Prob'ly," he said with a burst, "sum on yer 'ill think me a fool like, but—but—well, it ain't Christian as we should send Mrs. Morris here inter th' Union. You does just what yer likes, but I withdraws my claim for th' rent. Theer—I'm maybe luney, but—well, theer 't is!" and he sank back in his chair as though his soul had been relieved of a burden.

"I doant think as that's exac'ly business," said Tuckwell. "It's what they calls a bad precedent; an' yet—yet I may say it shows a good spirit. I'm thinkin' as maybe I'd not miss th' little mite Mrs. Morris owes me, an'—an' if the rest 'ill do th' same, we'll just call it square."

"I'm hanged if I'm going to be outdone by any rantin' Methody local," exclaimed Needham, trying to drive his fists farther into his breeches-pockets, "an' slates or no slates, we'll wipe 'em out."

"It's like eno' I'll get a danged good wiggin' when I get 'ome from th' owd man," put in young Horton, "but if he can't spare the price of half a ton of coal, well, he's a thick 'un."

The four men twisted uneasily on their chairs.

They had each been guilty of a foolish act, but each had the consolation that he was not alone.

"An' what say you, Mester Catsby?" enquired Bill Needham.

"It strikes me as Trentboro' 'ill be hevin' a laugh at us as a lot o' milk-'eaded, soft-'earted—oh, no offence, Mester Needham, but yer knaws what Robson, an' Teddy Russell, an' them there 'ill have ter say in the White Deer when they 'ears on't. We'll niver be done wi't, an' we'll be chaffed as no folks iver was."

"Many a man doesn't do what 'is 'eart tells 'im a'cause he's afeard o' bein' laughed at," said the preacher.

"I'm not thinkin' as how anybody should know owt abaat it," said Needham. "If we hou'd our clap, no folks 'ill be owt wiser."

"That's trew," answered the haberdasher, "an' I'm willin' ter join in, providin' ther's nowt said abaat it."

"Well, we ain't sich fools as ter gie folks chance o' laughin'," said the other. "At least, I ain't."

Lawyer Spencer made a mild objection, but he was promptly overruled. "Then, gentlemen, may I take it this meeting is dissolved without the creditors coming to any decision?"

"Jest as yer like, mester," said Tuckwell, "but I'm thinkin' we've cum to a decision all t'same."

Never once had Martha Morris raised her head. She was conscious enough of the conversation, and she knew that her lot was not to be the workhouse after all.

"I thank you, sirs; I'm 'ternal obliged ter yer," she said in her thin voice, which had no softness in it.

"An' I thinks it's abaat time I clears off ter my tea," said Necdham, rising and stretching himself.

He managed to push something into Martha Morris's hand as he left the room. So did Tuckwell. But they did it unseen by the others. They did not like to be laughed at.

For a few minutes the men stood talking on the pavement. The old woman slipped by them. There was no colour in her cheek, not even a gleam of brightness in her eye. She ambled across the Market Place and down Church Lane.

"I was thinkin' ye was ill, Mrs. Morris," said another old dame. "I was wonderin' why th' shutters was up."

"Oh, I had a bit o' business, an' i' course there was nobody as I could leave ter look after th' place."

She went into her kitchen and took off her black bonnet with the faded lace. She stirred up the fire and put on the kettle. Then she went round to the front and lifted down the shutters.

"What has ter be, mun be," she muttered to herself.

There was the usual gathering of tradesmen that night in the bar-parlour at the White Deer.

"Hev yer eard that old Martha Morris es broke at last?" said Robson the butcher.

"Well, there's no wonder," said Mike Wainwright, the saddler, from his corner. "I suppose you've been let in fur a bit, Mester Atkin?"

Amos Atkinas usual blew out his cheeks. "I doant know as I hev," he prevaricated.

"She'll be owin' you summat, Needham?"

"Not a ha'penny" replied Needham decisively, pulling at his pipe.

" Ain't she broke then?"

"Broke!" and Needham tried to sneer.

"Anyways," said Robson "'er shutters was up ter-day."

"Well, they waint be up ter-morrer you take my tip on't," said Needham between the whiffs. "How things does get abaat, to be sure. Business ain't brisk, but's brisk eno'. Old Mrs. Morris was a thinking' o' takin' a bigger shop an' we just 'ed a gathering ter see if we'd be justified in helpin' ter stock th' place. She only wants six months' credit, an there's some 'ere wants a deal sight more'n that. Broke! who 'iver 'eard tell o' such a thing. You'll be sayin' as I'm broke next."

"You're an awful liar, Needham!" said Amos Atkin, leaning over and whispering to him.

"Oh well, we all on us hes our failin's!"

And the people of the sleepy old town did not hear of the failure of Martha Morris.

Nobody has ever been known to say a good word for the men of Trentborough, rarely indeed, have the men of Trentborough ever been heard to say a good word for each other.





The Salon Jury, 1884 (section of painting). From the original painting by Henri Gervex, in the Luxembourg Gallery.

The same is in the Palais de l'Industrie and among the artists represented are Carolus Duran, Bouguereau, Henner, Cabanel, Bonnat,
Laurens, Lefebvre, Puvis de Chavannes, Cormon, and Constant,

A CENTURY OF PAINTING.

RECEPTION OF PICTURES AT THE SALON.—AIMÉ MOROT.—A TYPICAL WAR PICTURE.—MARIANO FORTUNY AND HIS INFLUENCE.—BELGIAN AND ENGLISH ART IN PARIS.—FREDERICK WALKER.—HENNER.—LAURENS.—DAGNAN-BOUVERET.—CAZIN.—FRITZ VON UHDE AND THE MODERN RELIGIOUS PICTURE.

CONCLUDING ARTICLE.

species of contained activity settles upon artistic Paris. The cases in the students' quarter no longer resound to the merry warfare of opponents determined to decide once for all some mooted point of art. The leaders have deserted the open field, and in the seclusion of their studios are occupied in producing for the coming Salon their annual contribution to their country's art. The

twentieth of March marks the term of this period of production. By the close of that day all paintings and sculpture must be delivered at the Palais de l'Industrie in readiness for the judgment to be passed upon them by jurors duly elected from the artists who are no longer eligible for medals, having received them all. Over ten thousand works of art are offered each year, of which three-fourths are returned to their respective authors,

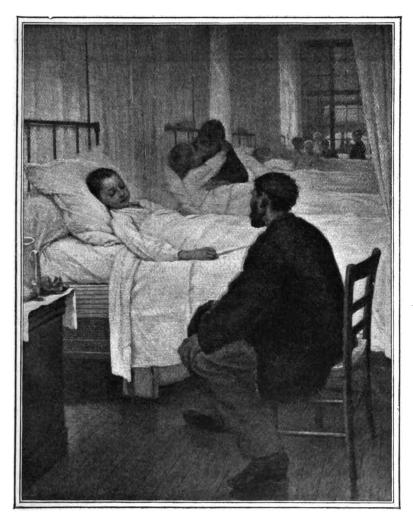
and only one-fourth considered accept-· able for exhibition. The morning of the twentieth, therefore, finds the studios awake early. In a building or a quarter where there are many artists, the carman, who comes by appointment to take the picture to the exhibition, finds himself besieged with entreaties to go to this, that, or the other studio first, in order that a last final touch may be added to the precious canvas on which, in the case of the neophyte, so much depends. caricature which represents the painter finishing his picture in an open carriage en route to the Salon is hardly exaggerated. No sooner, however, has the van, freighted with so many hopes, left the studio than the painter, if he is young, departs for the Palais de l'Industrie. There, before the great door opens for the reception of pictures, is a motley crowd of painters, students, and models, bent on obtaining a first view of the forthcoming exhibition. Great waggons fantastically laden with pictures of all sizes; commissionaires, with the curious wooden rack for carrying burdens, bearing pictures on their backs, closely followed by the artist, anxious lest harm should come to his offering; women, young and old, with tiny frames, threading their way through the confusion, besiege the gate. guardians of the Salon, attacked on all sides, but maintaining a stolid indifference born of long habit, receive and enregister the pictures. The sentry, ever present at the doors of all public buildings in France, stands to his post. The city policemen, alternating between laughter and anger, devote their attention to the unruly crowd. As the day wanes, the motley crowd increases in size and audacity. Profiting by a moment's relaxation of vigilance, the people enter the building, and soon the great stairway is lined. narrow passage is left, through which the pictures are carried, to a constant accompaniment of impromptu criticisms.

The noise and hubbub are only

equalled by the good nature of all concerned. Five or six men, directed with vehemence of gesture and voice by a uniformed guardian, toil up the steps, carrying an immense canvas representing a religious subject, whereupon, with one accord, the crowd breaks into a solemn chant of the church. A hunting scene next appears, and the yelping of all the hounds in Christendom wakes the echoes. Portraits fare ill with the assembled critics, and comments of the most outrageously personal nature are bandied about with a recklessness which makes one hope that the originals portrayed have prudently stayed away. Each picture calls forth some remark, generally of good-natured criticism, though the volatile assemblage is capable of enthusiasm, and sudden and spontaneous applause occasionally breaks forth. sans of rival masters are naturally in force, and mingled applause and groans meet their respective and respectable contributions.

The last half-hour before the final closing of the doors against the reception of pictures surpasses pandemonium. Bourse in a financial crisis may equal, but can hardly surpass, the indescribable confusion caused by belated arrivals, bewildered workmen and guardians, and the crowd of students intoxicated with the licence of their freedom of speech. last comes a forcible ejection; the great doors are closed, the band of students form in line and march down the Champs Elysées, and within the great building the year's production of art is garnered, awaiting the jury which is to separate the wheat from the chaff.

The picture by Henri Gervex, which represents the jury of 1884, shows a number of the most famous of contemporary painters in the midst of this work. The picture is typical of a class which, in the latter years of this century, finds favour with a public whose taste has apparently been formed on the basis of photography.



Visiting Day at the Hospital. From a painting by Jean Geoffroy, in the Luxembourg, Paris.

An everyday scene in a Paris hospital, a happy proof that extreme realism need not preclude sentiment, which in this case is simple natural, and free from sentimentality.

No other period of the world's history has been so truthfully represented; and if superficial truth were the end and aim of art, works like this would assuredly be great. The excess to which realism has carried us in healthy avoidance of the stilted and periwigged portrayal of history in the last century has had its use technically, and few are the subjects with which a painter thus equipped is not fitted to grapple. When the subject is one which in itself is pictorial the result is the

greater from its superb technical completeness, as in the masterly picture by Aimé Nicolas Morot of the historic "Charge of the Third Dragoons at Reischoffen."

Surely war has never been more truthfully represented than here, and a comparison between this picture and the famous Meissonier, "1807," gives one the contrast between single soldiers minutely studied and superadded one to the other, and a whole regiment painted



The Charge of the Third Dragoons at Reischoffen. From the original painting by Aimé Morot.

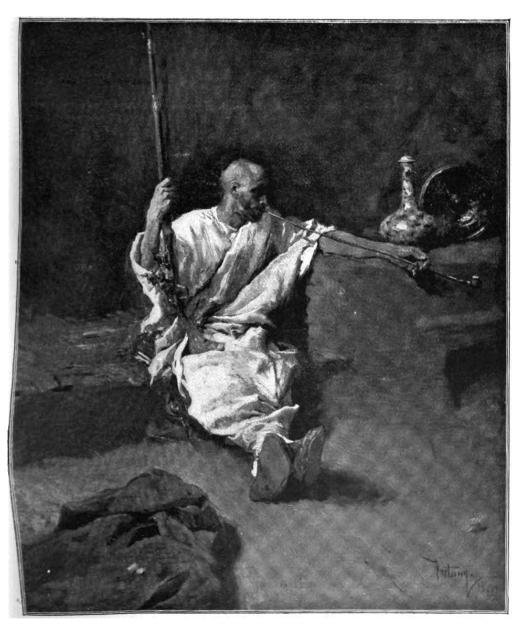
The picture represents a herole effort to turn the fortunes of the day in one of the chief battles of the Franco-Prussian War, in which this regiment was decimated

as a single man. Millet was wont to say that a flock of sheep in painting was "a single animal with a thousand legs"—une bête à mille pattes—and it is thus that Morot has conceived his work. The painter was born at Nancy, June 16, 1850, received the Prix de Rome in 1873, and is a typical example of the best result of French art education. He has attempted, always with adequate technical ability, a wide range of subjects, and but for an apparent mental indifference to sentiment would be one of the most remarkable men of his time.

A painter whose indifference to sentiment was marked, but who in the comparative poverty of technical ease of expression had great influence in the early seventies, was a Spaniard, Mariano Fortuny. As with Regnault, we have become, with the waning years of the century, more

and more indifferent to the painter who plays with his art. Craftsman-like capacity to subjugate rebellious pigments to render intention no longer dazzles us; it is with the intention alone that we deal, and by which we have returned to the days of Cimabue, whose picture, carried through the streets of Florence to its final restingplace, has left the impress of its passage in the name of the Street of Joy. Unlike the public of Cimabue, we demand complete technical ability, in order that our impression of the picture may be undisturbed by insufficient workmanship. But twentyfive years ago the evidences of technical ability were hailed with delight, and the means obscured the aim of art.

In 1870 "The Spanish Marriage" was exhibited at Goupil's, in Paris, and the world of art placed Fortuny on a pinnacle. A poor boy, born at Reuss, in Catalonia,



An Arab Guard. By Fortuny.

In marked contrast to the seductive glitter of Fortuny's costume pictures is a number of canvases such as this where the sombre, serious Arab character is depicted with equal mastery.

June 11, 1838, in his early youth he accompanied his grandfather, who travelled from place to place with a little collection of wax figures. It was Fortuny's cleverness

The Song. From a painting by Alfred Stevens, in the Gallery of the Luxembourg.

This picture, bought by the State in 1890, was painted some years before that date, and is one of the most representative of the artist' work.

in repairing their little stock-in-trade, and modelling new figures to add to the collection, that attracted the attention of some person of taste, who prevailed on his native town to make an allowance of forty francs a month, in order that Fortuny might study. At nineteen, the

Academy at Barcelona awarded him the prize which sent him to the Spanish Academy of Rome.

Fortuny's stay in Rome was interrupted

by a visit to Morocco, which gave him an insight into Arab life, and determined the character of his graver work. Endowed with a marvellous facility, it was on small canvases, filled with myriads of figures in brilliantly contrasting costumes, that his first success was won. In Paris, where the artistic domination of Meissonier was felt in the picture mart, the enchanting Fortuny, who joined to the French painter's minute rendering of form a kaleidoscopic charm of colour, had success from the first. Up to that time his life had been a hard struggle with poverty. From that time until his death, in Rome, November 21, 1874, collectors contended eagerly to cover literally his pictures with gold. Towards the close of his brief life he made earnest efforts to abandon his somewhat trivial art, and render, in subject at least, the life which he saw about him; and his unfinished "Beach at Portici " marked, possibly, the beginning of a more serious effort. I have used the term "enchanting," and there is no other which so fitly applies to him, considered

from the technical view of a painter. His influence in the cosmopolitan city of Paris and on French art has passed, but until to-day it has been paramount in Italy and Spain. There promises to be a revival of an art more noble in its tendencies in Italy, as was noted at the Venetian

Exhibition of last year; and Spain has endeavoured officially, through its academies, to stem the tide of virtuosity with some success.

The work of scores of able Belgian painters must regretfully be passed by in this brief chronicle. Mention must be made of Alfred Stevens, however, who, adopting Paris as his home, has portrayed the *Parisienne* as none of her compatriots have done, though they are by no means

nonchalantly munches cherries they are extremely human. The landscapes or seashore backgrounds, when these fair creatures venture out of doors, are painted with consummate skill, and are soberly rich in colour, as are the interiors in which they are generally depicted. Stevens has been and is now a painter beloved of painters, than which no greater reward can be desired by an artist.

One of the memories of those days that

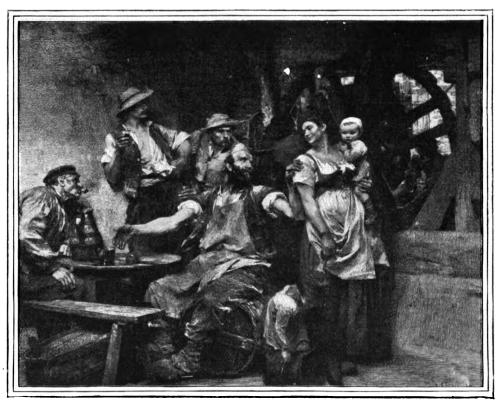


The Vagrants. From the original painting by Frederick Walker, in the National Gallery.

A band o English gypsies encamped upon a common. One of the not numerous productions of this artist. This picture, painted in 1888, was purchased for the National Gallery from a fund bequeathed by Mr. John Lucas Walker.

insensible to her grace as a subject for painting. Stevens was born in Brussels, May 11, 1828. The picture here reproduced, "The Song," is in the Luxembourg, and is an admirable example of his work. In sentiment, Stevens shows a fine appreciation of the ultra-civilised woman. His women have no other object than to be charming. They are by no means deficient in intelligence, and from the supersensitive creature who has placed herself beforea bronze sphinx to ask the riddle of her own existence to the beauty who

comes back strongly is the conflicting interests aroused by the cosmopolitan character of the students in the ateliers. Each betrayed in his work his own racial characteristics and the influences of his own country's art, brought to bear on him before resorting to the common school of Paris. To these influences must be added those of the dealers' galleries, where in turn the art of Europe passed before our eyes. To-day it was the latest Fortuny at Goupil's; later, at the same place, Michetti charmed us with the magic of



Vintage Time. From the original Painting by Leon L'Hermitte.

his early work. At Durand-Ruel's, the most hospitable of galleries to the shabbily dressed student, the large rooms running through from the Rue Lafitte to the Rue Le Peletier were filled with Millets and Corots, which did not then sell so readily but that one could return often to study them; and side by side with Manet and Degas could be found exquisitely finished Stevenses or robust Courbets.

Of English art little was to be seen, the English having an appreciation of their own men which kept prices at a point where no picture dealer could find a profit, if, indeed, Paris was ready for the appreciation of the best English painters, whom they discovered some years later at the Universal Exposition. No lover of Thackeray, however, among our band of English-speaking students ignored the charming drawings by Frederick Walker, which

served to illustrate *Philip* and *Denis Duvai*. Walker was to live but two years longer, when an English student brought in his artistic baggage a photograph of the "Vagrants," which is now in the National Gallery in London. Later it has become evident how much his influence, like that of George Mason, a painter fated like Walker to die young, has done for modern English art.

Frederick Walker was born in London, May 24, 1840. His history is that of so many English and American artists who, from the period of embracing an artistic career, must, in the event of lacking fortune, earn their living by their art. The fortunate youth of countries where art is recognised as a national institution, finds scholarships ready and municipalities willing to aid his early years. In England, private patronage demands only

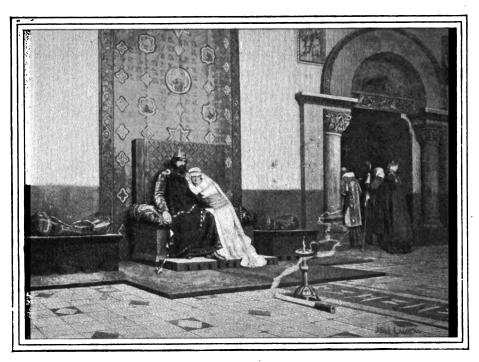
work which shows a certain maturity, and Walker commenced by illustration. He was even for a time apprenticed to a wood engraver, until Thackeray gave him an died June 4, 1875. In no wise allied to the pre-Raphaelites in technical manner, his art bore the marks of the deep sensibility which pervaded their work, and



Sacramental Bread. From the original painting by P. A J. Dagnan-Bouveret, in the Luxembourg, Parls.

Form the Saion of 1896. The corner of a Breton church, with a group of characteristic agures. In the original the vestments of the altar-boy add a note of vivid red to the otherwise quiet theme.

opportunity to do original work. Of extremely delicate constitution, allied to a nervously sensitive temperament, his life was a long battle, which ended in a quiet village of Perthshire, St. Fillians, where he which in literature found its exponent in Tennyson's earlier verse. Essentially English, his work was influenced by those great works from the Parthenon which are treasured in the British Museum, and



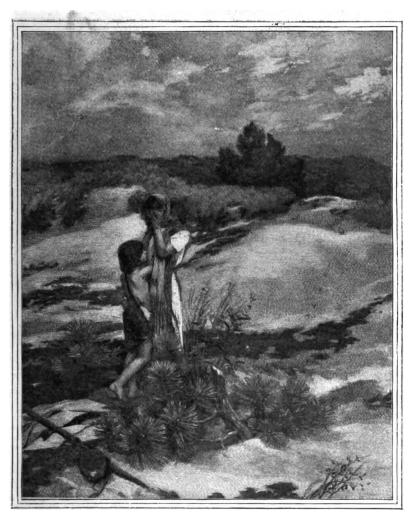
Excommunication of Robert the Pious. From the original painting by Jean Faul Laurens in the Luxembourg Gallery.

Robert the Pious, who became King of France in 996, offended the church by his marriage to Bertrade and was excommunicated. The clergy are leaving the room after having extinguished and overthrown a candle as a symbol of their decree.

which have served English painting in their effect on Albert Moore, Poynter, and Leighton. Walker's themes, however, were taken from the everyday life of the country. His own sentiment embroidered a pattern of grace and sensibility on the heavy forms of village girls and country Quiet lanes, waterside ferries, vokels. wooded borders of heathered heaths, formed the scenes in which his idealised figures moved, endowed with so much of honest truth that, like Millet's peasants, though less nobly grand, they are typical rather than realistic.

The life of the peasant, which has preoccupied so many of our painters of this later day, has been treated with an idyllic quality by another painter, who, at the time of Millet's death in 1875, was winning is first recognition. Leon L'Hermitte, born in the little village of Mont-Saint-Père, January 31, 1844, occupies to-day an honoured position in France. His first successes were due to his charcoal drawings, from which, enlarging his themes to life-size figures in oil, there seems to have clung to his style something rugged and angular, like the abrupt accents which lend life to a charcoal drawing. With this technical qualification, his work is essentially large and simple, redolent of the fields in which his figures live. The picture reproduced herewith, representing a moment's pause in the wine-making, is full of robust quality of form and strong opposition of light and shade.

Of the same race, treated with greater delicacy in research of character, are the Breton peasants in church, about to partake of the sacramental bread. Pascal Adolph Jean Dagnan-Bouveret, the painter of this picture, which is in the Luxembourg, was born in Paris, January



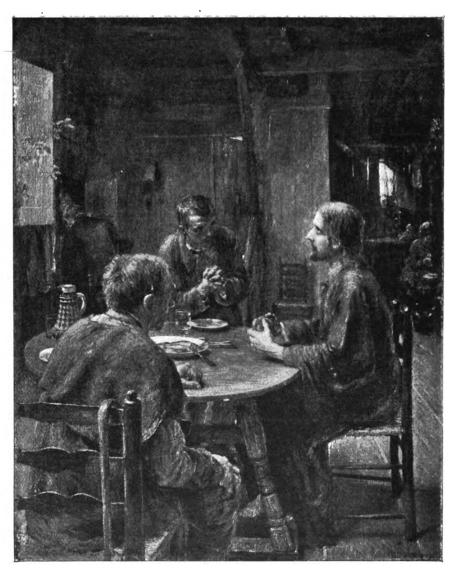
Hagar and Ishmael. From the original painting by Jean Charles Cazin, in the Luxembourg, Paris.

From the Salon of 1890, where it was greatly admired, this picture entered the Luxembourg, where it has maintained its popularity.

7, 1852. Dagnan, as his name was abbreviated in 1873, when he was still a student in Gérôme's atelier in the École des Beaux-Arts, is an interesting type of the painter who is ever ready to burn his vessels behind him and venture to new fields of expression. In 1873, while temporarily a student of Gérôme, I remember standing behind his easel and wondering if painstaking imitation of Gérôme could go farther than Dagnan's. Since then he has shown himself facile and clever in the "Manon Lescaut"; almost flippantly

Parisian in the "Wedding Party at the Photographer's"; painstakingly realistic in the "Accident"; and deeply reverential in sentiment in his well-known "Madonna and Child," standing in chequered sunlight under a trellised arbour. Still a young man, as men are esteemed in France, it is difficult to foretell his future, though he has been able to trim so varied a course through the channel of art without losing his bearings or becoming in any degree superficial.

We reproduce here, as an example of



The Supper at Emmaus. From the original painting by Fritz von Uhde.

An interesting attempt on the part of a modern German painter to infuse a sentiment of everyday life into a Biblical subject

the work of Jean Paul Laurens, "The Excommunication of Robert the Pious." Laurens was born at Fourquevaux (Haute Garonne), March 28, 1838. He is the inventor of the modern historical picture, which seeks not only by wealth of archæological research to render itself plausible, but by the disposition of figures to background to reproduce the actual scene as it must have occurred.

In the Salon of 1875 there was high on the walls a picture of a shipyard, which to my student taste was strangely attractive, and which was painted by a then unknown man, Jean Charles Cazin. It was the picture of "Hagar and Ishmael"—here reproduced from the original in the Luxembourg, where it promptly took its place—which first gave recognition to Cazin (born in 1841, at Samer, Pas-de-Calais). The

sentiment of the landscape, taken from an unfamiliar part of the forest of Fontaine-bleau, the introduction of the almost modern figures, revealed qualities not only of an original mind, but of a pure-blooded painter. Such his numerous pictures painted since that time have proved him to be, and he occupies in modern art that middle ground between the traditions of the past and the promises of the future which denotes in itself the attributes of a sane mind.

An example by a stranger within the gates of Paris, which in art, at least, welcomes even her former foes, may serve as a conclusion to this paper. "The Supper at Emmaus," by Fritz von Uhde, is interesting for several reasons. It is an example of the newer German art, which was briefly described in a former paper, and one of the best of the modern efforts at depicting Christ in the surroundings of our everyday life, which have become frequent in late years.

Von Uhde became celebrated through this picture, and it was then learned that until 1877 he had been an officer in the Saxon cavalry, which he had lest to become a pupil of Munkacsy. He was born at Wolkenburg, in Saxony, May 22, 1848.

"The Supper at Emmaus" is extremely interesting, as it invites comparison with the wonderful human picture in the Louvre, of the same subject, by Rembrandt. Comparison is, of course, impossible, if only from the fact that the Rembrandt, in the centuries which have elapsed since it was painted, has become a type which is sunken deep into our hearts. The picture by Von Uhde, however, evading the danger of such comparison, is like its predecessor, extremely human. In the company of the humble, removed from them by his spirituality alone, the Man of Galilee takes his place in the composition naturally and simply, and there is little or no feeling of incongruity between his figure and the surroundings. Art such as this, where human emotion goes hand-in-hand with technical ability, which has for its author a Teuton, and finds its first recognition in Gallic sympathy, can well be called modern. The existence of such art in Germany led me to close a former paper with a roseate prophecy for the future. If such prophecy becomes accomplished fact, Germany will not fail to acknowledge the debt which all civilised people owe to the art of France.



The Foundling. From the original painting by Louis Deschamps, in the Luxembourg, Paris.



Father (seriously).—"Do you know what becomes of little boys that tell lies?" Son (promptly).—"Yes, father. They make lawyers of them."

WHY TUMASH DHU WALKED.

BY JAMES MAC MANUS ("MAC").

ILLUSTRATED BY BERNARD F. GRIBBLE.



UMASH'S good woman reached to each of us a fine bowl of cream with an iron spoon in it of the size a hungry man likes.

"Musha, craythurs, it's starved with the hunger yez must be. Fill the

far-lan's first out i' that pot, an' the minnit yez is done, I'll have yez brewed such a dhrap o' tay as 'ill rouse the hearts in yez."

Neither Tumash Dhu nor I needed much persuasion, other than that given by crying stomachs, to attack it with hearty goodwill. Before the fire we sat, and we drew the pot between us, and, getting our legs about it, plunged in our spoons with small delay, ladling up the stirabout as right hungry men can, sousing it in the cream, and speeding it on again to our watering mouths; for, when you've been on the hills from early morning till late at night, and eaten but a few mouthfuls of oat-bread and butter in the interim, what with the walking, the running, the spieling, the sliding, what with the whiff of the heather, and with all the feurgortach (or hungry-grass) you must have tramped over, I'll warrant, though you have been the most dismal dyspeptic was ever on a doctor's books, you'll bring back an appetite with an edge like the east wind. Tumash and I fetched back just such appetites, and very little else, for I was (putting it mildly) an indifferent shot, and tried Tumash's temper sorely.

As Tumash had put it in anticipation,

a fine pot of stirabout with a bowl of yellow cream proved "no mad dog to him," nor yet to me. Neither of us had time for a word. "Ivery time ye spaik it's a mouthful lost," was Tumash's maxim. We dug our ways through the pot from either side, till only the thinnest film separated our "claims," when Tumash rung his spoon in the empty bowl, and said "God be thankit!" on which I too, feeling a sensation of satisfaction permeating the "far-lands," threw my spoon to the bottom of the pot with a "Thanks be to God, and, Amen!"

And now Ellen was pouring out for us two large bowls of tea that was thick, and as dark as a blind window.

"Do ye like yer tay sthrong, Jaimie?" she asked me.

"Well," I said, shaking my head doubtfully at the black flood she was pouring into the bowl, "my mother doesn't commonly make it so sthrong."

"An' there ye are now," she said; "that's how docthors differ. Tumash here wouldn't tell his name for tay if ye didn't make it as sthrong for him as the shafts of a cart."

"Why, I should think it a mortial bad plan to make a habit of takin' yer tay like that, Tumash Dhu," I said.

"Tay," Tumash said oracularly, as he gazed at it with a blissful expression in his eye, "Tay," he said, "is niver no good—an' I'd as soon ye'd give me so much dish-water to dhrink—if it's not made that a duck might walk on it."

I had grave doubts about this, but as Ellen had the bowls now creamed, and the piles of oat-bread and stack of butter at our elbows, I couldn't afford time to dispute it.

Tumash and I attacked the pile and the stack and the bowls of tea so bravely, and sustained the attack so spiritedly, that it was little wonder Ellen expressed the opinion that she "wouldn't like to be the aiting-house would do a big thrade with many such customers." We didn't stop to bandy compliments

HOVETICE.

"An' what sort of shot was the Red Poocher?"

with her. And Tumash only passed two remarks during the demolition: he said, "Ma'am, if what yer bread wants in hardness was borrowed from yer butter, there'd be a big 'mendment on the two of them"; and, later, he said reflectively, "The back o' my han', an' the sole o' my fut to you, Meenavalla!" I gave him an inquisitive look, hereupon, whilst in the act of having what Tumash would call a good 'shlug' out of my bowl; but Tumash was too intent upon his business to mind my look. When Tumash felt both hun-

ger and thirst allayed, and that, over and above, he had taken in something for positive pleasure, he pushed his emptied bowl from him, blessed him with all the fervour of a man satisfied with himself, Ellen, and the whole world, and winding up with another "God be thankit!" turned to the fire, drew out his short brown pipe, and began to fill it; and I, feeling within that blissful sensation

which pervades the breast of one who hungered and has fed heartily, did in every particular likewise.

"What put me in mind of it," Tumash said, suddenly, from out of the reek of smoke the little brown pipe was raising, "was your firin'."

I blew a spy-hole through my own halo of smoke, and tried to see Tumash on the other side of the fire. "Put ye in mind of what?"

"Meenavalla. An' the way of it was, your firin' put me in mind of the Red Poocher's."

I didn't quite see the connection, but

I asked, "An' what sort of shot was the Red Poocher?"

"The best from h—— to Guinealand."
"Yes?" I said; modesty and vainglory struggling within me.

"An' then ye bein' the worst shot atween the same two dis-thricts, ye naturally put me in mind of him."

Now, I did not, and do not, claim to be an expert marksman, but I confess the comparison, drawn as it was antithetically, hurt my feelings.

So I smoked on as silently as the

asthmatic gully I pulled would permit. And Tumash, beyond the fire, proved himself my fellow—even his pipe noisily confessed the same weakness.

"Av coorse," Tumash said, after a couple of minutes, "ye knew I was game-keeper at Meenavalla wanst?"

"I did."

"Did ye know what fetched me out of it?"

"It must 'a been that the owner considhered Tumash Dhu had too good a reputation, an' was too honest, for to be wasted in Meenavalla."

"I was five years in Meenavalla"— Tumash sat upon a stool so low that his knees stuck up on a level with his breast; he rested his elbows on his knees and his chin in his hands, and told his story to the fire-"five years, an' contented in throth I was with it; for meself an' Ellen was snug an' warm, plenty to ait, an' not much to do, an' a fire all the winther would roast a quadhroopit. But the saison there was an English jintleman from a place they call Hartfoord had the shootin' i' the place But lo an' behould ye! the first taken. week in A'gust the weather was mortial fine, an' I was tempted to slip aff over to me mother's counthry to help her win the grain o' hay, for she was in the black need o' help-without a man-body nixt or near her wee place. Well, over to her, to Cashelaragan, I slipt for the week, an' put as much of her wee grain o' hay through me fingers as I could do in the time; an' then back again. An' the first news met me slap in the face when I come back was, that I wasn't away the second night till the poochers was on the place, an' night an' nightly they had shot it for the remaindher o' the week!

"The curse o' the crows light on the same poochers, an' a hard bed to them! But when the English jintleman come, it's the poor shootin', Lord knows, he had: an' the sweetest of tempers wasn't his—small blame, indeed, to the man anondher

the circumstances. He sayed he might as well have takin' the elephant-shootin' as the grouse-shootin' of Meenavalla, bekase the wan animal seemed as plentiful there as the other. He wanted to know was there e'er a chance of a loy-on or a bear, or any other baste o' prey on the place, he might get the chance of a shot at. I, of coorse, toul' him there was no loy-ons in this part o' the wurrl'; an' I sayed there was no bear barrin' wan, an' if he shot that wan he was liable to be hung for shuicide——"

"Are ye sure ye sayed that, Tumash?" "Sartint sure-but it was when I got the rascal's back turned. But I did tell him till his face wan thing. It was of a day he had the heart o' me bruck with the chirmin' an' charmin', an' the blasphaimin' he carried on with. Siz I till him, 'Yer honour,' siz I, 'there's wan way, an' if we could work it we'd get frightsome big bags o' game, an' no mistake.' way's that?' siz he, comin' till a stan' still. 'If ye can manage to put me on such a way,' siz he, 'I'll make it well worth yer while.' 'Well, I'm mortial thankful to yer honour,' siz I, back again till him, 'an' the way's simple enough—if it only worked.' 'D-ye,' siz he, lettin' a tearin' ouns (oath) out of him, 'an' out with it at wanst, till we hear what it's lake.' 'Well it's this, yer honour,' siz I. 'If ye could somehow or other manage to fetch down a grouse with ivery growl ye give, an' a snipe with ivery curse, we'd have mighty full bags ere we'd be long on the hill—do ye see?'

"An' faith he did see it, an' it's some poor body's prayer I must 'a had about me at the time kept him from puttin' the contents of his gun intil me sowl. An' I then larnt what Peadhar Mor the tailyer (God rest him!) used often tell me—that a madman an' an Englishman is two shouldn't be joked with.

"Anyhow, this lad took himself off in a fortnight with a bigger load of sin (I'm thinkin') than snipes, an' he wrote a square parch of a complaint to Belfast, to Misther McCran, the owner o' the place, an' Misther McCran he give me the divil to ait over the business. He went within an ace of makin' me cut me stick; an' threatened that if iver he'd hear of a single brace of birds bein' pooched off the place again, I'd go, as sure as me name was Tumash.

"Well, glory be to goodness, when I come by a good thing I know it; an', small blame to me, I like to stick till it; so I sayed to mesilf, 'Tumash Dhu,' siz I, 'plaise the Lord ye'll sleep with wan eye open an' the other niver closed for the saisons to come, an' then ye'll be as wide awake as whose-the-other; an', from this out, the poocher who puts salt on your tail 'ill be as cliver a man as yerself.'

"Well an' good, the nixt saison come round, an' an Englishman again tuk the shootin' of Meenavalla. He was a Mishter Bullock (Lord save us! what onchristian names them English big bugs do have), an' he owned wan o' the grandest houses, I b'lieve, from head to feet of London sthreet. Well, howsomedivir, this Misther Bullock had took the shootin' this year, and when Misther McCran informed me of this, he toul' me also if there was as much as the mark of a poocher's heel found on all the place I would get laive to go thravellin' for me health."

· " An' for yer appetite, eh, Tumash?"

"On or about the twelfth of A'gust I gets a letther from Misther Bullock himself to tell me he had another shootin taken down the country in the neighbourhood of Glenveigh, an' that himself an' a frien' he was fetchin' with him would spend a week on the Glenveigh mountain first, an' then they'd dhrive up through the Glenties way on his buggy, an' take the next week out of Meenavalla; an' for me to be prepared for them on or close afther the twentieth. An' he sayed it was toul' him the lan' had been pooched last year, till the shootin' of it wasn't

worth the powdher, and to remember that he wasn't goin' to stan' no sich nonsense; if there was a feather touched on the place he would shue me masther for all he was worth. 'Make yer mind aisy, me boy,' siz I when I read his letther, 'about The poocher who wings a bird on Meenavalla atween now an' the twentieth, 'ill be a conshumin'ly cliver fellow who's in the habit o' gettin' up afore he goes to bed at all.' An' very good care I had been takin' for the three weeks gone that no poocher would look at it across a march-ditch; an' betther care still, if betther could be, I was goin' to take that gun's-iron (barrin' me own) wouldn't be levelled over it for the nixt eight days. For I was on it a'most day an' night, an' the tail of a poocher's coat never wanst showed; an' I was detarmined it should be so till the Big Fellow himself would step on the grass.

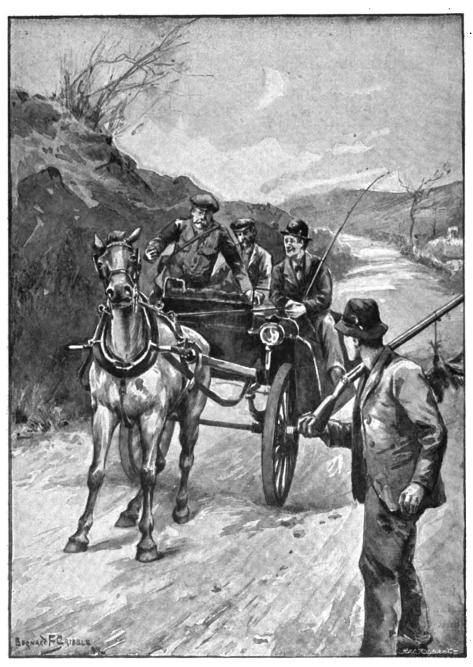
"It was just three evenin's afther the letther come that I was out as usual on the hill, an' I was havin' a couple of puffs at the grouse on me own account, when I noticed a thrap dhrivin' along the road below; an' half an hour afther, I sees Ellen on top o' the Skreg above the house, waivin' her shawl to me. 'Surely,' siz I, to meself, 'it's not the Bullock arrived?' But when I reached Ellen, that same was the identical news she had for me. An' I'll not deny that I give a hearty good 'He seen me shootin', Ellen, as he come along the road, conshumin' till him!' But I hurried down to the Wan jintleman was coolin' the pony (a purty wan) up an' down the road; an' the other, who was me man, Ellen toul' me, was in the house. the bouldest face I could on me, and marched in as undaunted as if I'd been only sayin' me prayers on the hill. knew be the scowl of him I was in for 'Are you Gallagher?' siz he, quite short an' without reachin' his han' to me. 'Yis, yer honour,' siz I, removin' me hat, 'Tumash Dhu Gallagher—an' ye're mighty

welcome to these parts,' raichin' him me han', and givin' him a mortial sight warmer shake hands than, I seen, he wanted. 'Was them poochers I seen on the hill, Gallagher, as I come along?' siz hethough mighty fine he knew who the poocher was at the same time. things considhered, I thought it best to tell the truth, an' shame the divil. 'No, sir,' siz I, 'it was meself.' 'What!' siz he, 'have you turned poocher as well as presarver? Upon my word, a purty fellow, ye are! a purty gamekeeper! What did ye fetch down?' 'Nothin, plaise yer honour,' siz I; for nothin'it was. 'Well, plaise goodness,' siz he, 'I'll not sleep in me bed the night till I report ye to ye masther, an' I'm now givin' ye warnin' of it.' I pleaded with the fellow as best I could, and showed him the outs and ins o' the thing, but I might as well 'a been spaikin' Spanish to pavin'-stones: he was bound to report me, an' report me he would; for it had always been his opinion, he sayed, that afther all the cry-out again' poochers there was no poochers werse nor the gamekeepers themselves-an' in the intherests of his brother-sportsmen all over the kingdom, he sayed, more nor in his own intherests, he'd have to report it. see,' he says, 'ye got my letther,' tossin' it from him onto the table, for the letther had been lyin' in the windy from we got it; an' he had it in his han' when I come in. 'I wasn't to have come, as I sayed there, till the twentieth; but my sweetest curse upon all poochers—not forgettin' all gamekeepers-my sweetest curse on the whole assortment o' them, my Glenveigh place when I come on it was either pooched, or gamekeeped, or both, an' I wouldn't have got a hamper of birds off I have promised a great it in a month. number of presents of fowls to my friends in England-promised to have them with them in the first week, and it's lookin' purty like as if my promise is goin' to be bruck for the first time in me life-an' all through poochers an' gamekeepers, d--n them!

Be ready,' siz he, afther he had 'coamed an' fumed up an' down the house, an' cursed curses that I wondhered didn't burn a hole in the roof gettin' out— Be ready,' siz he, 'afore the screek o' day the morra mornin', an' be out with us till I see what we can find in the nixt couple o' days. In the manetime, go out an' house that pony, an' give him the best care Meenavalla can afford; yer wife 'ill make a little shake-down for ourselves, an' give us a bite of anything aitable, for our bellies is biddin' our backs goodmorra with the fair dint o' the hunger."

"The first sthray light wasn't on the hill in the mornin' till the three of us was there afore it, an' us bangin' away for all we were worth. The two jintlemen got intil betther humour when they found how plenty the birds was, and they fetchin' them down like hailstones. behould ye, I used always feel more or less pride in meself as bein' a purty dandy shot, but I can tell ye them two jintlemen very soon knocked the consait out o' me: the second jintleman was a pleasure to see shootin'; but to see the Big Fellow himself puffin' powdher was a sight for That man, sir, could kill sore eyes. roun' a corner. Goin' on forty years, now, I've been handlin' a gun, an' have come in the way of a good many sportsmen that knew what end of the gun the shot come out of as well as whose the nixt, but that man's aiqual or anything comin' within an ass's roar of it I niver yet did

"Anyhow, to make a long story short, we dhropped the birds so fast—or, I should say, he dhropped them so fast, for though we lowered a smart number enough for or'nary Christians, it was nothin' at all in comparishment with what he did—so fast did they dhrop that again' the third night he had the place purty lonesome enough of game. He had got all nicely hampered an' packed off; an' he started, himself an his companion, off in their buggy nixt mornin', sayin' he'd have another thry at



"He thundered out of him an oath as would be a godsend to a quarryman for splittin' rocks."

Glenveigh again, an' be back to Meenavalla wanst more in somewhat betther nor a week's time. Though both o' them graised me fist like jintlemen afore they went, he didn't seem to relent a bit about the report to Misther McCran—it was his solemn duty, he sayed, an' he couldn't overlook it.

"It was only the second evenin' afther, I was comin' down aff the hill, an' just as I had got onto the road, an' I carryin', hung over the top of me. gun, a brace of snipe I managed, by good managementship, to scrape up, when roun' the bend o' the road, afore I could say 'God bliss me!' comes a thrap tearin', with two jintlemen on it. 'Bad luck to yez!' siz I, 'an' God forgive me for cursin',' dhroppin', at the same time, both gun and birds, for I was sartint sure it was the chaps right back on me. But, in another minute, I seen I was mistaken, for naither o' them had the red whiskers o' my man: so I lifted me belongin's, an' went on whistlin'. When the thrap overtuk me, it pulls up, an' without as much as Goodmorra, Good-evenin', or The devil take ye, the biggest-lookin' bug o' the two, snaps me up with, 'How did you get them birds, me man?'

"By goin'for them,'siz I. I knew it was an ondaicent way to answer a sthranger, but the boul'ness of him went again' me 'Who are you, sir?' was the next imperence he outs with. 'I'm a son o' me mother's,' siz I, 'an maybe ye know me betther now.' 'Maybe,' siz he, 'ye'll be so kind as to tell me where Black Thomas Gallagher, the gamekeeper, lives in these parts. 'Sarra be aff me,' siz I to meselt, 'what's this, or who is he this, I've been 'Yis,' I siz to him, 'I think I can show ye that, bekase I'm the identical man himself.' 'Oh, indeed,' siz he, pullin' himself together, 'are ye, indeed? I didn't think when I took Meenavalla for the saison that I had got sich a witty gamekeeper intil the bargain. I'm a

lucky man, throth,' siz he, an' his naybour laughed hearty. I turned square on the road, an' I looks at him. anondher a great mistake, sir,' siz I, 'the shootin' o' this place has been takin' by Misther Bullock, of London.' 'Exactly,' siz he, 'Misther Bullock, of London (which is me), has got the privilege of payin' for the shootin'; and his gamekeeper, be all signs, is to get the fun an' the snipes.' 'Come now,' siz I, 'none o' yer thricks upon thravellers. Misther Bullock, o' London, was here the beginnin' o' the week, an' shot the lan' as clean as the day it was cree-aited, and there's not a jintleman from wan end to the other of London sthreet but maybe is at the present spaikin' sinkin' his tooth in wan o' the grouse, and wishin' to the Lord he was ten times hungrier.'

"But mo Chron! the face that jintleman (an' his naybour, too) dhrew on himself, when I sayed this, was somethin' fright-some to behould; an' may I niver die in sin if the gun didn't shake in me han'. He thundered out of him sich an oath as would be a godsend to a quarryman for splittin' rocks, an'——"

"Ellen, a chara," said Tumash, "I misdoubt me this fire would be out long ago if ye hadn't the doore boulted. Throw a grain iv thurf an' another lump of fir on it, a theasge."

"Well, Tumash?"

"Well, Jaimie?"

"I want to hear it out. Was that Bullock?"

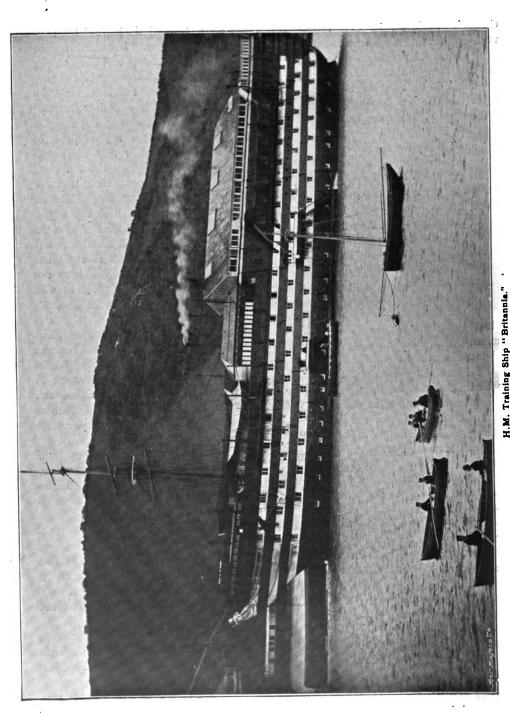
"Conshumin' till him, iv coorse it was."

"An' him shot the place? The red fellow?"

"Was the Red Poocher, av course, who was afther sthrippin' Bullock's Glenveigh shootin' as bare as a bald head just afore Bullock come on it.

"An' then what happened to you, Tumash?"

"I walked, -- an' I'm here now."



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IS THE BRITISH NAVY INVINCIBLE?

A REVIEW OF THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE BRITISH NAVY, EMBODYING THE OPINIONS OF LEADING EXPERTS, INCLUDING LORD CHARLES BERESFORD, M.P., SIR CHARLES DILKE, M.P., CAPTAIN BLACKMORE, CAPTAIN FROUD (SHIPMASTERS' SOCIETY), AND COMMANDER CRUTCHLEY, R.N.R. (NAVY LEAGUE).

BY ARTHUR H. LAWRENCE.

ILLUSTRATED BY PORTRAITS AND PHOTOGRAPHS, AND TWO DRAWINGS BY NORMAN WILKINSON.



HE maintenance of Great Britain's supremacy as a maritime power is the question above all others which should lie at the heart of every Briton, yet history teaches us that it is the last question which either

of the great political parties are prepared to consider. One need make no apology for attempting to find a reply to this question in the scope of a magazine article, for, although Great Britain must needs stand or fall with her Navy, it is an indisputable fact that our Naval Administration is of such a character that it has been left to popular agitation, to the courageous efforts of Rear-Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, M.P., and others, backed up by a powerful section of the newspaper Press, to induce the Government of the day to remember what should be obvious to any man deserving the name of statesman, that Great Britain's paramount need is absolute naval supremacy. In other words, a Navy which shall be, under any probable circumstances, invincible.

I presume there is no politician who is not prepared to lay his hand on his heart and declare, with Mr. John

Morley, M.P., that "Everybody knows, Liberals as well as Tories, that it is indispensable that we should have not only a powerful Navy, but I may say an allpowerful Navy" (Manchester, '93). Yet, the fact remains that our Navy is by no means invincible. Great Britain has not an "all-powerful Navy" and, though a great deal has been done in the direction of increased expenditure, partly as the result of Lord Charles' famous memorandum of nearly ten years ago and subsequent efforts, nothing has been done to reform our effete system of Naval Administration so far as the Admiralty is concerned, and, although we have the money, we have certainly neither the ships nor the number of men which expert opinion on all sides declares to be necessary to safeguard the interests and the maintenance of the British Empire.

"Not as part of a consistent scheme of national policy, not on the initiative of a great statesman, was it at length determined to strengthen the fleet," write the authors of *The Navy and the Nation*. "The Naval Defence Act of 1889 was due to the efforts of writers and speakers." The maintenance of our naval supremacy is essentially a matter of progress, involving a continuous policy of keeping up with the times, whereas, hitherto, the tendency has been to do as little as possible, and then, in times of

panic, to waste money with the recklessness which a scare necessarily occasions, and to waste it upon ships and material of the worst kind, purchased at inflated prices. In one notable instance, the facts are too recent to have escaped anyone's recollection. In December of 1888 Lord Charles Beresford brought forward his programme for the expenditure of over twenty million pounds on the Navy. Those in authority stated that no further expenditure was necessary, a statement which was followed by his Lordship's prompt resignation. Within three months of the statement the identical programme of the "enthusiastic sailor, who, when he got into figures, was rather out of his depth," was adopted in its entirety, even down to the class of ships built, by the Government of that day.

As it was in 1888, so it is likely to prove in 1898. If the growing efficiency of the Navy is to be not only maintained but increased, in proportion to the naval strength of other nations, it will be by efforts made from without and not from within. It is to the nation at large that the appeal must be made, an appeal which it is to be sincerely hoped will be backed up by the Press irrespective of party or political prejudice; elements which should not enter into a question of purely national importance, which it is not too much to hope may once and for all be placed on a non-party, and therefore a permanent and satisfactory, basis.

In attempting even the scantiest summary of this national question, and in recording the opinions which recognised naval experts have given me, we have first of all to ask,—What are the needs of Great Britain in regard to her Navy? How far does the Navy fall short of obvious requirements, and in what direction should the Navy be strengthened?

The first of these questions I shall endeavour to answer by quoting the opinions of Lord Charles Beresford and Sir Charles Dilke, as to what is required by us in respect of Imperial Defence. Secondly, a plain statement will show if our Navy, at the present moment, can be considered to fulfill the conditions laid down by Imperial requirements, whilst sound hints as to the reformation most needed will be found, I think, in the interviews given me by Commander Crutchley and others.

The need for an "all-powerful" Navy is admitted by everyone, but I have not seen the reason more concisely given than it is by an organ of the country Russia, whose interests are most opposed to ours in the East and in the Far East.

In the issue of the semi-official Russian organ, the Novosti, for January 5th, we find, "What sense is there in the annexation of hundreds of islands and thousands of spots in all parts of the world? There is no military or naval power which could maintain such possessions. A good blow, and the badly constructed mosaic falls to pieces. And we are afraid that English diplomacy, by its provocative policy, will sooner or later bring its country to this catastrophe." It may be that, with regard to our Russian friend, the wish is father to the thought, but whether this be Russian official feeling or no, the interest of the paragraph I have quoted lies in the fact that it touches the heart of the whole matter. It is the business of every one of us, and not merely of a Conservative or Liberal Cabinet, to see to it that our defence is such that "a good blow" delivered by any Power or combination of Powers shall not have the desired result, and that by reason of an invincible Navy, our "badly constructed mosaic" shall under no possible combination of circumstances "fall to pieces."

We possess a strong Navy, by far the most powerful Navy in the world, no one doubts that, but it may be that the struggle—and not on our own initiative—is even now at hand, and it is not too much to ask that our Navy shall be

absolutely invincible. There is no reason why it should not be so; for, although our total naval expenditure is larger than that of Russia and France put together, the amount we spend in proportion to our commerce and theirs, is at the rate of one-twentieth of the amount spent by Russia and France. Great Britain has

everything to lose and nothing to gain by a great naval warfare, but the possession of an invincible fleet is the safest guarantee that no Power will try to quarrel with us. "Those who love their country best should do all that in them lies to secure peace. This can only be achieved by having our defences equal to our needs." writes Lord

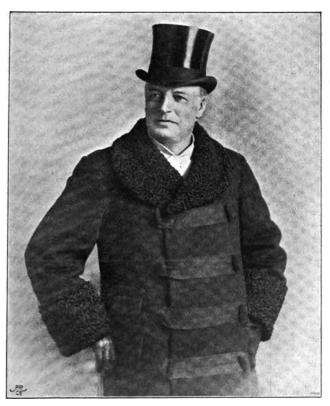
Charles

clusion such a statement implies that in the case of an Empire like that of Great Britain, a weak Navy and armament make for peace, but it would be a bold politician who would venture to such an experiment.

Before going further, perhaps I may be permitted to quote a few words

> from Sir Charles Dilke's invaluable book entitled. Imperial Defence, which is none the less valuable for the fact that it is distinguished by that sense of respon sibility and reserve, which is characteristic of the utterances of one whose sound knowledge is beyond all dispute.

"We may now turn our eyes from general princi-



Charles busynd

(Photo by Draycott.)

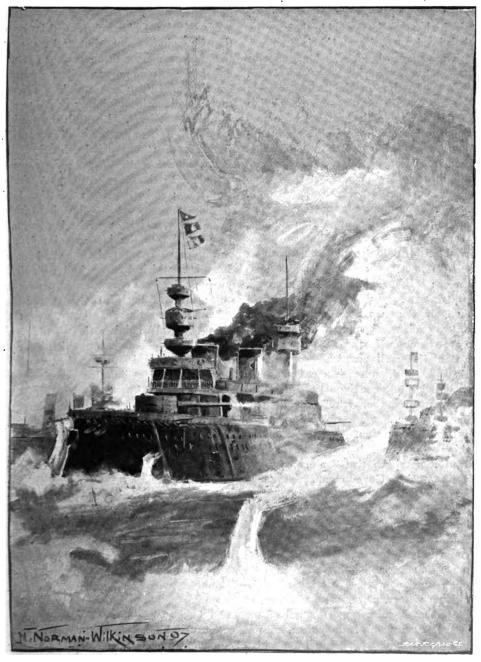
Beresford in his "New Year's Message" to *The Temple Magazine*, and when it is suggested, as it has so often been suggested, that a patriotic desire for a practically impregnable Navy implies a bloodthirsty desire for war, the suggestion is so palpable an absurdity that it is hardly worth controverting. Pushed to its logical con-

ples to the particular case before us—the defence of the British Empire. We think we may safely assume that Englishmen, wherever they live, will lay down their lives if need be, to protect English homes, both those of the old country and of the new Englands beyond the seas; that they will fight in defence of peace and good government which has



PEACE.

Drawn by N. Wilkinson.



WAR.
Drawn by N. Wilkinson

been undertaken in India, and last, but not least, they will never abandon, without a struggle, the command of the sea, which alone renders possible their trade, their insular security, and their Empire."

The case for the Navy, if I may so term it, is put very explicitly in the same book. "From the time of the Dutch wars in the seventeenth century the population of the surface of the sea has been predominantly British, and this predominance, once established, has so increased that, at the present moment, one-half of the tonnage of the world is British, no other single nation possessing a tenth. The gross tonnage of steamers in the world slightly exceeds ten millions, of which nearly seven millions of tons are British, while no other nation owns a million tons." Sir Charles Dilke continues: "It may be said that a crowd, containing seventy English, seven Frenchmen, six Germans, five Americans, one or two Italians, two or three Spaniards, a Dutchman, a Norwegian, a Swede and a Dane is, for all practical purposes, an English crowd, and such a crowd would accurately represent the nationality of all the steamers in the world." So much for our commerce. "The ocean is, in fact, a British possession. . . . wherever ships touch, English is spoken. Had it not been that for nearly thirty years British Governments refused to increase their responsibilities, all the uncivilised coasts in the world would have long ago been under British protection." And what does this demand of us? "The command of the sea, then, means the possession of a fleet which"-in case of an attack upon us-" has gained so decisive a victory, or series of victories, as to render hopeless any renewal of the struggle against it." Surely then, it is not too much to hope that the Navy which made such a move forward mainly as the result of Lord Charles Beresford's action in 1888 shall, without delay, be put on a satisfactory basis?

This brings us to the all-important point. Wherein is the Navy at present deficient?

Sir Charles Dilke answers this question by pointing out that "At present the weakness most dangerous to Great Britain's maritime power arises from the scarcity of British seamen." To this must be added insufficiency of ships, and last, but not least, although one might imagine it to be a matter easily remedied, the lack of a responsible head of the Navy, in the sense of an officer corresponding to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army; and apart from the First Lord of the Admiralty for the time being, who is, of course, a civilian and a landsman.

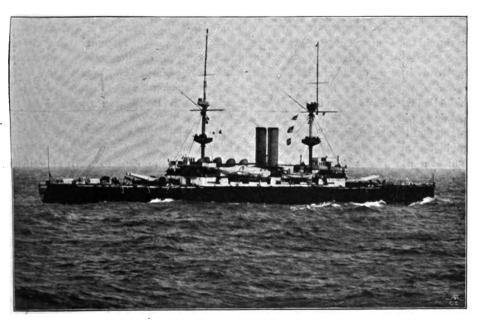
To deal with the latter point first, as on the previous two points I shall record interviews which I have had with those amongst the most competent to speak on them, the late Sir John Briggs, the late chief clerk to the Admiralty, writes of recent "Naval Administrations—1827-92," with an inside knowledge which has not, so far, been called into question.

"During my Admiralty experience of forty-four years," wrote the late Sir John Briggs, "I may safely affirm that no measures were devised, nor were any practical arrangements thought out, to meet the numerous duties which devolve upon the Admiralty, and which at once present themselves at the very beginning of a war with a first-class Naval Power; on the contrary extraordinary apprehension prevailed on the mere rumour of war, especially amongst the naval members, arising from their consciousness of the inadequacy of the fleet to meet the various duties it would be required to discharge in such an eventuality. How such a state of things could exist for so many years in a country possessing boundless wealth and amongst a people renowned for superior intelligence and practical common-sense, and reputed to possess a remarkably keen eye for their own interests, is truly incomprehensible, but such is an indisputable

fact." The explanation of this apathy, however, is not far to seek. It is due to the fact that the recommendations of the naval advisers to the Admiralty can always be safely ignored as they are never made public except by some accident; as in the case of Lord Charles Beresford's memorandum, which, through no fault of his, appeared in the Press. There is no one responsible for either the weakness or strength of the Navy, unless it be the aforesaid First Lord of the Admiralty,

Naval Lords of the Admiralty carry no weight, as no publicity is given to their representations. Lastly, public indifference, consequent upon a mistaken belief as to our naval superiority." But the precise point, which cannot be ignored in this article, and to which I have already alluded, is found stated with characteristic clearness and brevity in Lord Charles' famous memorandum, where he writes:—

"It is quite incredible that, with the



H.M.S. "Royal Sovereign." (Photo, Gregory & Co., 51, Strand.)

whose personal responsibility is of an exceedingly limited character, and who stands and falls with the rest of the Cabinet, amidst the clamour of a General Election.

Another passage in Sir John Brigg's work will, moreover, elucidate this: "To what must we ascribe the principal causes or this extraordinary neglect of the Navy? First, the rivalry between the two great parties in the State. Second, a mistaken view of economy. Third, because the professional opinions of the

knowledge we possess as to what will actually be required at the moment of a declaration of war, no steps have been taken to organise or prepare any method or plan for showing how or where these absolutely necessary requirements are to be obtained. We know that France, Germany, Russia, Austria, and Italy have a regular headquarter's staff at their Admiralties, whose duties consist solely in organising plans of the most elaborate description for war preparations. These plans are corrected in detail every three

months, so that in the event of war being declared the fleet can be mobilised, reserve ships filled with men, ammunition, and provisions, and the commanders of squadrons given immediate and decisive instructions as to the line of attack they are to pursue. . . In England no similar plan or system exists, although we have so much more important isolated possessions. Under our antiquated system it would take us two days for the proclamation of war." And Lord Charles adds that the French, for example, can call up her first reserve in forty-eight hours, whereas we should require from five to seven days. Such a state of things should go a long way to assist any enemy in striking the "good blow" which, as the Novosti has said, should "break our badly constructed mosaic to pieces."

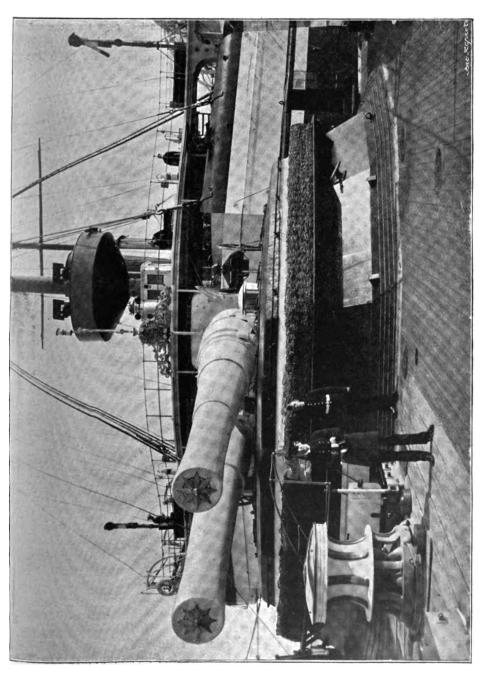
The fact that there is no reserve which would adequately supply the wastage of men in the Navy that would take place during warfare, is an even more pressing question than the building of ships. However, we are always told that we can fall back on our merchant service in case of war. To gain some information on this point I called at the offices of the Shipmasters' Society, a body which, more than any other in the kingdom, represents the interests of the mercantile marine; and had some conversation on the subject with Captain Blackmore, the ex-chairman of the Society, who is an authority on most matters affecting the merchant service, with which he has been connected for nearly fifty years; and also with Captain Froud, the energetic Secretary of the Society.

"Of course, as you know, the percentage of aliens employed in the merchant service is an exceeding high one," Captain Blackmore exclaimed, "and many so-called English ships are entirely manned by foreigners. The proper remedy seems to me to re-institute the 'three-fourths British seamen condition' which prevailed in times of

peace up to 1849, when the navigation laws were done away with.

I am not suggesting for a moment that we should attempt to tamper with Free Trade principles; but after the successful introduction of free corn into this country, the Manchester men in the early part of the 'fifties got Free Trade on the brain, and the result was that they succeeded in applying the same principle to the employment of seamen—a very different matter. With a view to the cheap transit of their goods, both inwards and outwards, they persuaded Parliament to destroy the sole interest that British shipowners had in the carriage of the imports and exports of the country. navigation laws were done away with, and British trade was opened to the foreigner alongside of the British ship-The shipowners then made a considerable outcry, and attacked Parliament with the view to relieving themselves of something which they considered a burden, of which the maintenance of apprentices was one of the first, and then the interests of the British sailor in the traffic of the country were destroyed by the admission of foreign seamen to an equal position with himself in British ships."

Captain Froud added: "The average number of foreign sailors engaged on British ships, excluding the Royal Mail services and coasters, has attained the high percentage of from 50 to 60 per One important point, which is not generally appreciated, is that not only in the case of some British ships are all the crew composed of foreign seamen, but in some cases the ship is commanded by an alien, so that nothing British is left, save the flag! I have myself been a passenger in a ship so manned, where the master, officers, and all the other hands were foreign, and not one of the crew could speak a dozen words of English. generally believed that every officer who is in command of a British ship must



The after barbette, H.M.S. "Camperdown." (Photo, Gregory & Co., 51, Strand.)

carry a British certificate, but this is only the case where the ship leaves a port in the United Kingdom or in some of the colonies. Looked at from a national point of view, a great want of the mercantile marine of to-day is boys in training to become seamen. Shipowners generally will not employ them."

"The great need of the present movement in this direction," Captain Blackmore added, "is the proper education of seamen in the merchant service. question the Government will have to consider is whether they will keep and maintain an efficient Naval Reserve, or whether they will rely upon the mercantile marine for any number of men. latter case I can only say that under the present conditions it is impossible to expect men from the merchant service to perform the work required on a modern man-of-war. To do that you must give these seamen adequate training. over, as Captain Froud has said, the foreign element, if you leave out the coasters and Royal Mail services, actually forms more than half of the mercantile crews."

I then called upon Commander Crutchley, R.N.R., the Secretary of the Navy League, who has all these vexed questions at his fingers' ends, and mentioning Sir Charles Dilke's reference to the scarcity of seamen as being the most pressing danger, I alluded to the possible remedies suggested by Sir Charles as being, "First, the training of men for the Navy who could be employed in the Merchant Navy in time of peace, and, second, the restricting of the employment of foreign seamen."

"Well, I should not say restrict," Commander Crutchley replied, "I regard the employment of foreign seamen in the mercantile service as a national danger. If the nation will do nothing, then a great disaster will assuredly overtake us. As a preliminary step we are trying to induce the County Councils to undertake the

technical instruction of British seamen. We contend that the maritime industry is our principal industry, and that the seaman has as much right to be technically trained as the members of any other calling or trade.

"At the present time there is no training-school for British seamen. Apprenticeship is a thing of the past, except so far as officers of the mercantile marine are concerned, and the sons of the artisan class. who should form the rank and file of the merchant service, have no chance given them of going to sea. On the other hand, we do not want in the merchant service the rakings and scrapings of the streets. We want honest, decent, British boys, and we realise that, to get these, we must improve their conditions generally, and we maintain that, if we do improve their condition, owners will get a corresponding advantage for any trifling trouble they are put to, by having trustworthy men.

"Of course, you must understand that we are not advocates of what may be called the hot-house rearing of seamen, but as in the present order of things seamen are not being trained in any other way you must supply the want. There are letters lying on the table here from many members of the County Councils expressing their readiness to co-operate with the scheme, when it is further advanced. The difficulty is not with regard to trainingships, but the fact that shipowners will not take these boys as apprentices unless a premium goes with them, and there seems to be a doubt as to whether a premium could legally be paid in addition to the technical training which would be given. At the same time, with regard to technical training, it must not be forgotten that the teaching of seamanship has been distinctly sanctioned and authorised by the Science and Art Department, so that little difficulty should be found in the matter when our scheme is completed."

Whilst speaking of insufficiency of ships, I suggested that Commander Crutchley

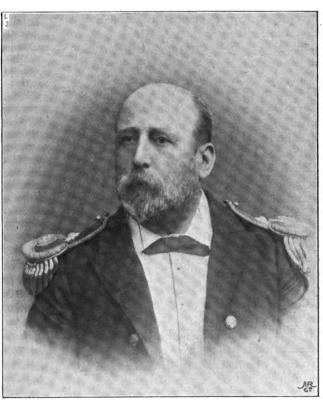
should give me a word or two with regard to the ever-recurring question of subsidised steamers.

"That is a question," said Commander Crutchley, "which suffers a good deal through being discussed by people who know nothing about it. You should certainly note the fact that Great Britain has quite lost her supremacy in regard to

fast merchant cruisers. Now, no foreign Power possesses men - of - war fast enough to catch our fast merchant ships; but take, for instance, Ger-Germany has many. got fast merchant cruisers which could catch our Campania and Lucania, and the great bulk of damage done in war time to our merchant vessels will be done by vessels of a similar type, sent out to prey upon our merchantmen. Such a ship as the Himalaya is an exceedingly handy type of ship to have in war time. Taking the Campania without any guns, any merchant ship of the same speed and armed with two 4.7 guns would succeed. with those guns, in sinking the Campania. On the other hand, a

merchant ship with a gun is as good as another merchant ship with a gun, and a battle between them would probably result in the destruction of both. You do not want a pair of magnifying glasses to see that Great Britain could play that game better than anyone else. Say we lost twenty cruisers to France or Russia in sinking an equivalent number, it would be a very good investment for us. Then, again, vessels such as these subsidised

cruisers can cruise for a tremendous time without having to put into port. They would be extremely useful for carrying despatches, and, as I have often argued in the United Service Institution, very few men-of-war would ever have enough time — and coal — to catch our fast steamers. To bring into this matter any question of warfare by torpedo-boats is



Commander Crutchley, R.N.R. (Photo, Louis Wilkins, Notting Hill Gate.)

absurd, and waste of breath. These ships are intended solely to act against vessels of their own class. No Naval Power would waste torpedoes in trying to blow up merchant ships."

In summing up, Commander Crutchley said: "We want more men, and the reorganisation of the Naval Reserve, which carries with it the re-organisation of the merchant service. That is the first point, and, *inter alia*, I must point out

that fishermen do not meet the requirements of a Reserve. The second point is, you must build more battleships. You can extemporize cruisers to protect commerce, but battleships to retain command of the sea you never can extemporize.

"By all means do anything you possibly can to bring the importance of an adequate Navy before the public," said Commander Crutchley in conclusion, "for indeed you may well emphasise this point, that there never has been any proper addition to the Navy, except in deference to popular clamour."

I append a table and a diagram, both of them taken from a pamphlet issued by The Navy League. The table shows the naval strength, not only of Great Britain but also of France and Russia, so that the reader can work the comparison out for himself, but in doing so it is necessary to remember the words of Lord Charles Beresford in his programme of March, 1893. "To make the British fleet equal in fighting strength to its possible enemies (France and Russia) it should be numerically superior by at least one-third, taking classes of ships in their order." It will be observed that, so far from its coinciding with the requirements of one-third superiority, the number of battleships is actually inferior to France and Russia combined. Another thing to be remembered, in order to prevent any fanciful notion that things will do very well as they are, is that ten of our "standard" battleships carry as their armament muzzle-loading guns, and one is partially armed with muzzle-loaders.

A diagram would be interesting, which would show our extraordinary want of method in regard to annual expenditure on naval construction. It would be seen that increased expenditure on the Navy has always been, as Commander Crutchley pointed out, the result of either a war panic or of newspaper agitation. This may be flattering to the influence of the organs which represent public opinion, but one

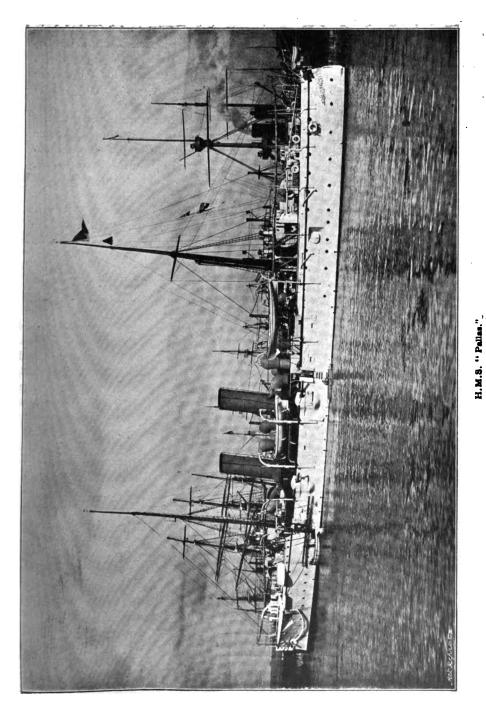
 NAVAL STRENGTH OF ENGLAND FRANCE, AND RUSSIA.

	England.	France.	. Russia.	France and Russis.
Standard Battleships .	52	36	22	58
Armoured Cruisers (modern)	9	7	6	13
Older Ironclads and Coast Defence	26	11	12	23
Modern Cruisers	116	41	4	-45
Torpedo Craft	311	264	231	495

This table includes all ships built and building that will be completed in 1899. It is based generally upon Captain Eardley-Wilmot's figures (see C 3 leaflet, p. 3) brought up to date.

would naturally prefer to see a system of expenditure on a more business-like basis. The expenditure has never been regulated by any standard of strength to be attained, or by any rule as to the number of ships we need relatively to the provision being made by other European Powers, or by any principle whatever.

In bringing these few, I hope, not uninteresting facts and statements before the reader I have intruded as little technical detail as possible, and whether or no I have been able to get anything new by way of contribution to a subject which is second to none in importance, my main object has been to appeal to those who, like myself, have an open mind on the subject, and can lay claim to no special or expert knowledge as regards the needs of our Navy. If it be not a liberty, I would, however, wish to lay stress once again on the fact that this is a matter which should be removed from the domain of mere party politics, and that it is one which appeals to the working man not less than to the professional and leisured classes. It is the taxpayer who has to "pay the piper," and however ardently



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one and all of us desire peace, it is to be hoped that no intelligent man or woman will be led away by any false suggestion of national economy—at the expense of a thoroughly adequate -by which I mean nothing less than—an impregnable Navy. It may be that war is far distant; it may be that it is even now at our doors. The commerce and the possessions of Great Britain are her veritable life-blood, and our individual and national prosperity must stand or fall with our fleet. Certain it is that every candidate for a constituency should be on this question an Imperialist first and a politician afterwards. At bye-elections, and at the next General Election, it may happen that no candidate in either the Liberal or Conservative interest shall venture to ask for the confidence of his supporters until he has declared himself ready to urge on his Government the necessity for a business-like and continuous policy in regard to naval expenditure.

To see to it that our world-wide possessions and our predominating sea-borne commerce are adequately protected, and to make our Navy so powerful that no blow, however deadly, shall break the "mosaic" of our Empire to pieces, is assuredly the duty, within the measure of our ability, of every one of us, and the result will be in every sense the truest form of national economy.

. This article will be followed by others completing the review of the Imperial Defences, dealing with the present position of the Army and Volunteer Forces.



THE PIRATES OF THE SOLENT.

THE NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE IN COMPANY WITH THE POET AND THE BOOKMAKER; CONTAINING THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT, AND SOME ACCOUNT OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES; WITH OTHER STRANGE AND IMPROBABLE ADVENTURES: EXTRACTED FROM THE LOG OF THE "FOLLY."

BY ALLEN UPWARD.

ILLUSTRATED BY THOS. DOWNEY.

I.

APOLOGY TO THE READER—COMPARISON WITH COLUMBUS—THE FIRST SUGGESTION—DISCOURTESY OF THE BENCHERS—CHARTERING A YAWL—PUBLIC EXCITEMENT—THE PRESS—THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY—AN UNWORTHY RESPONSE.

AM told that it is unwise on my part to publish this narrative. Old hands have warned me that it contains little

which is calculated to raise me in the estimation of the world, while with yachting men generally it is only too likely to involve me in opprobrium and hatred. Already I have had a foretaste of what I may expect, in the numerous and offensive paragraphs which appeared in the Press so soon as my intention to start on this

expedition became known.

Of the personal attacks which have been made upon me, most of them, I have reason to believe, by Fellows of the Royal Geographical Society who sought to minimise the importance of my discoveries, I desire to say as little as possible. My enterprise has been compared by them unfavourably with that

of Columbus. It has been said that he discovered a continent, while the place selected for discovery by me was merely a small island. But surely every intelligent mind will at once perceive that the smaller a place is, the harder it must be to discover! Only malice could blind itself to this plain truth. But such is the fatuous criticism to which my undertaking has been exposed.

If I had merely sought for notoriety, like Columbus, I could have discovered America too. It is easy enough. You have only got to shut your eyes and sail out on the Atlantic Ocean till you bump against land. That is exactly what Columbus did. The real difficulty is to avoid discovering America. It lies right

real difficulty is to avoid discovering America. It lies right in the way of everywhere. As a matter of fact, Columbus did not want to discover America. He wanted to discover China. He set out with that idea, and with the fixed intention of avoiding America. In this he was unsuccessful, but being a man of considerable presence of mind, he contrived to pass off his

unfortunate breakdown as deliberate



The Author, the Bookmaker, and the Poet.

and to pretend that he would just as lief discover America as any other place. Nowadays the Monroe Doctrine would be promptly applied, and Columbus be sent back with a flea in his ear; but in those simple times it was a gigantic boom, and Columbus was able to refuse five thousand dollars a night for a lecture tour through the United States.

It is because I despise the arts of self-advertisement that I undertook the discovery of a comparatively unknown spot. My desire was not to enter into competition with self-seeking frauds like Columbus and Dr. Livingstone, but in a quiet and unostentatious way to conduct a serious exploration and gather materials which would enlarge the bounds of human knowledge.

I ought, it is true, to have foreseen the prejudice which would be created against the expedition by the presence of individuals such as those with whom I unwisely allowed myself to be associated. The Poet might perhaps be tolerable on a house-boat. I have no doubt of his being admirably qualified for a voyage in a silver barge drawn by swans. But from the standpoint of serious yachting he displayed a detachment of mind, not to say a levity, which transgressed the limits of good taste, and gave unnecessary pain to the many respectable yachting men whom we encountered round the Island. for the Bookmaker, I now recognise that he is a man whose personal character would bring discredit on any enterprise with which he might be connected. His grotesque ignorance of nautical terms, and his strange inability to distinguish between the characteristics of a yacht and a horse, involved the whole affair in ignominy from the start. He would not try to learn. He did not even keep up appearances before the crew. A man who, after being afloat for a fortnight, deliberately alludes to the taffrail of a yacht as the crupper shows a moral deadness, a want of ordinary human feeling, which unfits him for

society; and I attribute the unfortunate mutiny of the crew directly to his conduct.

The first suggestion was made while we were at dinner in the gorgeous dining-hall of the Temple. Everyone knows that at these feudal repasts the diners at the long tables are divided into messes of four men. Our mess consisted of the Bookmaker, the Poet, and myself, together with a gentleman from India's coral strand with whom we were not personally acquainted. The wine had just passed round, and we had drunk the usual toast on these occasions of "Confusion to the Benchers!"

The Poet had been patronising us a little on the strength of having held a brief in Court that day, in a motion by consent to adjourn; and the Bookmaker was inclined to be jealous, and to hint that success at the Bar was less a question of personal merit than that of influence. (The Poet is related to a distinguished County Court Judge.) To restore harmony I diverted the conversation to the question of what we were to do in the Long Vacation.

The Poet moved for Switzerland and glaciers. The Bookmaker showed cause for Spain and bull-fights. The Poet, who is occasionally briefed in the police-court by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, was about to protest in language which would not have commanded the approval of the Benchers, when I interposed—

"Why not charter a yacht?"

The Bookmaker doubted whether a yacht might not prove infernally slow. The Poet enquired whether the learned judge who presides over the Admiralty Division of the High Court had recommended me to try and find out the difference between the bows of a vessel and the stern, before appearing in his Court again—a nasty allusion which I prefer to leave unexplained. But I silenced them with an impressive gesture.

"You do not understand me," I said "I am not talking of a common yachting trip, but of a serious undertaking with a worthy object, one which will lift us above the level of mere ordinary yachtsmen, and stamp us as cultured scientists. Listen! Somewhere in the English Channel, far to the south of Hampshire, lies an island known to passing mariners as the Isle of Wight. My idea is to organise an expedi tion to discover that distant land, to explore its coast, study its natural features, and investigate the habits of the wild abor-On our return we shall, of course, submit the result of our labours to the Royal Geographical Society, which will embody the report in its Transactions, and confer upon us its honorary Fellowship. What do you say?"

For a moment there was a dead silence, broken only by the clatter of the knives and forks of the hungry Benchers. Then they began to raise unworthy objections. The Poet suggested that the existence of such a place as the Isle of Wight had never been really proved. The Bookmaker pretended to think it had been discovered already by Nansen. The Indian gentleman meanwhile looked at us with a shocked expression, and stealthily helped himself to the claret out of his turn.

Nevertheless, the suggestion had gone home. The Bookmaker presently remarked—

"After all, you can get some fun out of a yacht. I knew two fellows who had one, one summer, and they had a jolly good time. They had her in Portsmouth Harbour, and they used to go ashore every day in the dinghy and knock around Southsea. There are some awfully nice girls at Southsea, and they used to bring them on board to tea. And they used to go to the music-hall at night and paint the whole show purple, you know."

I gazed at the Bookmaker sadly.

"But I think you said they had a yacht," I observed mildly. "Where did they go in their yacht?"

"Well, I don't know that they went anywhere exactly. I think she was anchored there. They did tell me they thought of going out once or twice, but whenever they did the skipper was sure to be drunk. And if the skipper wasn't drunk, then the crew were."

I laughed mirthlessly.

"Then I understand that your friends never went out of Portsmouth Harbour the whole time?"

The Bookmaker hung his head.

"Well, I think they went over to Ryde once or twice—on the steamer."

"Ah! That is not quite the sort of thing I meant when I spoke of chartering a yacht," I observed, exercising the utmost self-restraint. "My idea was not to treat the yacht merely as a floating tavern, moored in one spot. I contemplated that we should spend some little portion of the time under sail. I should propose to get at least as far as Cowes."

The Poet smacked his lips at this.

"I should like to go there," he chimed in. "I've heard there are some awfully smart girls there in the Week."

The Bookmaker took my observations in good faith.

"Right you are," he remarked cheerfully, "we can get across there for the races. We must rein in the yacht opposite the winning-post, where we can get a clear view of the course. I wonder if I could make a book on the Queen's Cup? I will give either of you fellows three to two about *Britannia* now."

We hastened to decline the offer.

"Then I will back *Meleor* against the fleet. How many pounds does she have to give *Ailsa ?*"

This sort of thing was becoming insufferable. It was a warning of much that was to follow.

"For heaven's sake, don't give yourself away like that!" I remonstrated. "Do you realise that the Solent is not a race-course; that a yacht is not alive? Try to acquire a little knowledge of maritime usages. Yachts do not give each other weight, but knots."

At this point we were interrupted by the Benchers, who, with customary arrogance, had been dining apart on a daïs at the end of the hall. Now, having finished their own meal, they rose with inconsiderate promptness, and withdrew to an inner apartment to enjoy the coffee and cigars which they did not think it courteous to share with us.

Somewhat annoyed by this treatment, we left the hall, and retired to my chambers to settle our further plans.

A curious, and to me very unexpected, discussion arose over the question of which of us was to take command of the expedition. I record it merely because of the light which it throws on human inconsistency, as exhibited by my two companions.

The Poet was at first perfectly reasonable. He gave me his support in snubbing the absurd pretensions of the Bookmaker, to whom we pointed out, as mildly as we could, that his knowledge of practical seamanship was about on a par with his knowledge of law, and was such as to render it dangerous for him to embark in a row-boat on the Serpentine without a man.

The Bookmaker listened, scowling, evidently unable to perceive the extreme folly of his claims.

"I suppose you think vou are better qualified?" he remarked sneeringly to the Poet.

I looked at the Poet, and laughed. But to my astonishment he gave me back no answering smile. Instead of seeing the irony of the Bookmaker's suggestion, he replied with a self-satisfied air—

"Well, yes; I fancy I do know something about sailing."

Disgusted to find the very man who had been the first to scout the Book-maker's pretensions so blind to his own hopeless incompetence, I lay back in my chair with a disdainful smile.

"I suppose you rely on the knowledge you picked up as a member of the Clapham Model Yacht Club, in your boyhood?" I suggested, with a glance at the Bookmaker, "or else on the experience acquired on voyages in the penny steamboats between the Temple and Battersea Park."

The Bookmaker, who had suddenly become as sensible as the Poet had become foolish, chuckled at these homethrusts.

"Why, you burning idiot," he threw in, "do you expect any sane man to entrust you with the command of a yacht? Don't turn the whole thing into a farce."

I smiled at the Bookmaker's sudden conversion, and also at the chagrin of the Poet. Then, to put an end to the discussion, as I thought, I added—

"Of course, I recognise that the responsibility is no light one, but rather than let the whole scheme fall to the ground, I am willing to act as captain."

Naturally I had supposed that, having been made to realise the impertinence of their own claims, they would have gladly accepted my offer, and not made my words the signal for a loud burst of vulgar laughter. Instead of being ashamed of their vanity in having entered into competition with an old salt like myself, these men turned from exposing each other's incapacity to unite in jealous depreciation of my skill as a navigator.

"You may impose on your unfortunate clients," sneered the Bookmaker, "but you know, old man, we have seen you in a boat."

"Yes," added the Poet, sniggering across at the other, "your theoretical knowledge will be no consolation to my sorrowing parents. I like mermaids, but I prefer to meet 'em on the surface."

Rightly incensed, as I think, at this barefaced behaviour, I lost my temper, and hinted plainly that I considered them both to be little better than land-lubbers. Equally warm language was used by them.

The Poet, I considered, stabbed below the belt in asking whether it was usual to provide the man at the helm with a basin. The other viciously insinuated that I could not be trusted to steer the yacht fairly.

"I believe you would pull her if you got the odds," were his exact words.

In the end we hit on a compromise on the lines of that in use among the Consuls

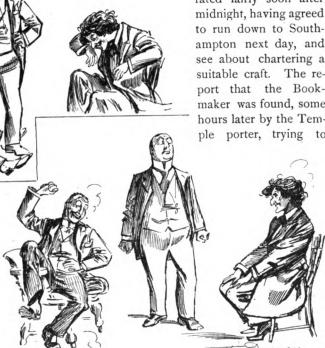
"Ouite so," the Poet agreed cordially. "Some fellow who is used to the Solent, and understands the channels and things."

The Bookmaker yielded an equally ready assent. He put the same idea in other words.

"Yes; better have a professional jock to show us the fences."

Such unanimity was most gratifying.

The rest of the evening passed off in perfect harmony, and we separated fairly soon after midnight, having agreed to run down to Southampton next day, and see about chartering a suitable craft. The report that the Bookmaker was found, some hours later by the Temple porter, trying to



to act as Captain."

"I am willingof Rome when they found themselves in joint command of an army against Hannibal. This was that each of the three should take the captaincy in turn, day and day about. I

agreed to this, but with a mental resolution to

go ashore whenever either of the others was in command.

It was not till the cruise had actually commenced that I noticed the extraordinary partiality for dry land which seized my companions on the days when the yacht passed under my control.

"By-the-bye," I observed carelessly, as soon as this question had been settled. "we had better get a thoroughly reliable skipper to do the rough work, a man who can be trusted to take charge at a pinch." construct a raft out of an umbrella and a copy of Maclachlan on Merchant Shipping, with which to navigate the Temple fountain, under the impression that it was an arm of the sea flowing between him and his home in Essex Court. may be dismissed as an idle slander.

The next day saw us all three in the train bound for Southampton. way down I tried to impress the others with the seriousness of the affair, but with poor success. A restless spirit seemed to possess them, from which I augured the worst.

The Bookmaker's costume was a study in indecency. He had chosen to assume a tail coat of very light tweed, the pattern of which could be heard above the engine whistle, a waistcoat seemingly of brown leather, with onyx buttons, corduroy riding breeches, and gaiters. It was in vain that I pointed out to him how ill calculated such a garb was to inspire respect in yachting circles.

"I doubt if any respectable yachting



"I doubt if any respectable yachting agent will charter us a boat if he sees you like that."

agent will charter us a boat if he sees you like that," I said.

The Bookmaker remained obstinate. He said that that was the attire in which he found most comfort, and he should stick to it. He even threatened to wear it on the yacht itself. He said he was coming on board to enjoy himself.

But this was a delusion.

My forebodings were realised when we arrived and made our way to the premises of the principal yachting agency. Mr. Day, the agent, received us with outward civility, but I marked the air with which he glanced at the leather waistcoat and the gaiters, and I felt that distrust was already germinating within his mind,

It fell to me to explain our business.

"We have come to charter a yacht," I said, as soon as we were all seated in the agent's office. "We want a good, firm, steady, reliable sea-boat; a cruiser, you understand. We don't want one of those things that lie flat on their sides every moment. Our object is comfort and safety rather than mere speed."

The agent nodded. So far everything was going on well.

"Yes, I've no doubt I can find you the sort of boat you want," he said. "May I ask where you propose taking her?"

"I will tell you," I answered. "Our

destination cannot long be kept a secret. The fact is we've got an idea of a rather novel kind. We propose to undertake a voyage of exploration—in short, to discover the Isle of Wight—"

But for the unfortunate impression created by the Bookmaker's extraordinary garb, I am sure that the agent would have heard me out with courtesy and interest.

As it was, his manner underwent a sudden and rather disagreeable change, and he sharply interrupted—

"Pardon me, gentlemen, but do you require a sailing-boat or a rowing-boat? And is it your intention to take it by the day or by the hour?"

I tried to set things right.

"We require a yacht," I said firmly, "a bond-fide yacht large enough for us tolive on board; and we intend to charter her for a month certain. You do not seem to understand. We are not going to make a mere trip there and back. We mean to land upon the island, and enter upon investigations which may be long and laborious." The agent listened to these explanations with a restless air.

"Well, I have no doubt I can accommodate you," he said in snappish tones. "How many tons do you want?"

I glanced thoughtfully at the Poet. The Poet glanced enquiringly at the Bookmaker. The Bookmaker gave a smile that would have softened any heart but a yacht agent's.

"I ride about twelve stone. I expect I should sail a trifle more," he murmured confidentially. "How would that work out?"

The agent stamped his foot. But he quickly mastered his emotion, and enquired—

"Have you any choice as to the rig?"
"No, none at all."

I gave this answer with admirable coolness. Had the others only had confidence in me all would have been well, and we might yet have emerged from the interview with credit. Instead of that I saw the Poet give an anxious start, and he immediately broke in—

"We should like the yacht to be wellrigged, of course. Your best rigging with nice clean sails. And we should like a good strong anchor. Personally, I am more particular about the anchor than the sails. I want an anchor that can be thoroughly depended on."

The agent glared, and for a moment I feared that he would refuse to entrust us with one of his boats. But again he struggled with his evil passions, his features gradually relaxed, and he succeeded in answering with quiet forbearance—

"I will bear the anchor in mind. Is there anything else that you are particular about?"

The Poet closed his eyes for a moment as if in reverie.

"I should like her to be called the *Nautilus*," he murmured presently, in dreamy tones. "Have you a *Nautilus* on your books?"

"I will see." The agent turned over

an index. "I have one *Nautilus*, but she is only a five-rater. I fear that would be too small for you."

"Never mind the size, as long as she is called *Nautilus*," rejoined the Poet. "We will take that one."

But here the Bookmaker and I protested, and tried to recall the Poet to reason. For a long time he was obstinate, and it began to look as though it would end in our taking separate craft. It might have been better so, in the long-run. However, the Poet gave in at last on condition that whatever yacht we took should be known as *Nautilus* on the days when he was in command.

The Bookmaker stipulated that she should be called *Persimmon* when under his control.

While this childish wrangle was proceeding the agent was hunting through his list.

"I think I have a boat here," he said at last, "that will exactly suit you—the Folly."

I felt a hot blush on my cheek. The Poet winced visibly, and I saw the Bookmaker clench his fist, and an angry light come into his eye. The agent proceeded with bland unconsciousness to read out the particulars.

"Built in 1870, twenty-five tons, yawlrigged. I suppose you have no objection to a yawl?"

Again I tried to save the situation by answering promptly that we had not the faintest objection to a yawl. And I frowned at the others to keep silence. But unfortunately the Bookmaker would not take the hint. His turf experiences seem to have poisoned his naturally generous temper, and made him a suspicious man.

"Is that anything against her?" he asked distrustfully. "Has she any vice?"

The agent bit his lip, and breathed hard.

"No, sir," he answered, in cold, metallic tones. "The only difference between a yawl and a cutter is that a

"Is there any difference in price on account of

the extra mast?"

yawl carries a small mast at the stern, in addition to the main-mast."

The Bookmaker was still suspicious.

"What does she want with a mast over her haunches?" he demanded with a dark frown.

"It makes her easier to manage." Each word came from between the agent's lips as if it were bitten off.

"Ah! I thought so!" exclaimed the Bookmaker with an air of triumph. "Then there is something wrong! I suppose she has a hard mouth, or jibs?"

I could see that the agent's strong selfcontrol was giving way, and thought it time to interfere.

"Nonsense!" I said. "You don't know what you are talking about. It's all right; I underperfectly." stand And turning to Mr. Day, I asked, "Is there any difference in price on account of the extra mast?"

The strong tension gave way. The agent lay back in

his chair, and gave vent to a hysterical sound between a laugh and a sob.

"No; no difference," he asnwered in a husky whisper, as soon as he had recovered himself. "You can have her for fifty guineas a month inclusive."

"We will take her," I said, rising. "Can you have her ready in good time for the Cowes Week?"

"Certainly. You can come and see her now if you like; she is lying on the mud outside. I presume you will have no objection to paying in advance?"

I was vexed at this last suggestion. Not that I minded paying, but because it made me fear that we had forfeited the agent's confidence.

For this I blamed the Bookmaker more

than the Poet. When we went out to inspect the yawl he made matters worse by patting its sides, and clucking his tongue at it! He even went so far as to say "Poor old girl!" to the yawl.

After that it was idle to keep up any pretence of being experienced yachting When I told the agent at parting that we were anxious to secure the services of a trustworthy and competent crew, he replied that he was quite as anxious about it as I was, and that the charter would contain a clause requiring us to insure the yacht for £1,000.

When the news of our project got bruited abroad during the next few days

> considerable excitethe Temple. were freely laid in against our ever and arrangements were made to post up daily bulletins the expedition. proceedings were set on foot to

ment prevailed in Bets the Common Room reaching the Island; of the progress of is, however, untrue that

obtain a writ ne exeat regno, and only abandoned in deference to the strongly expressed opinion of the Benchers.

The excitement even extended outside. All the tradesmen with whom we had ever dealt began to send in their accounts with enthusiasm. And no less than forty-seven agents of life insurance offices called on us during the next week and left complimentary cards and prospectuses. (The circumstance that the bell of the Temple church began tolling on the morning fixed for our departure was no doubt a pure coincidence due to there being some funeral in progress on that day.)

The interest culminated in a farewell banquet in our honour, held in a wellknown restaurant in Piccadilly Circus,



with a Member of Parliament (of the Anti-Parnellite persuasion) in the chair. He proposed our joint healths in an eloquent speech, winding up with an invitation to extend our voyage to his own Green Isle. We enquired if the institution of Benchers prevailed in the Dublin Inns of Court, and on learning that it did, declined.

The news of our great undertaking finally penetrated even into Fleet Street, and led to my being waited upon by a representative of the sporting Press. He arrived at a rather late hour, and did not appear to take many notes. However, he took something else; and I woke the next morning with a vague impression



He did not appear to take many notes.

that I had warmly insisted on the whole staff of his paper becoming our guests for the month, and that we had made frantic efforts to rate the Temple porter as one of the crew by profuse offers of grog.

I was agreeably relieved to read the following account in the next issue of the paper:—

"DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

A DARING PROJECT.

INTERVIEW WITH THE LEADER OF THE ENTERPRISE.

"It has been rumoured for some time that three distinguished members of one of our Inns of Court were making preparations for an expedition of unusual interest and importance. Last night our Special Commissioner interviewed the principal member of the party, a well-known gentleman, whose name, were we at liberty to mention it, would at once be recognised by readers of our police column.

"Mr.—, who was found in his chambers surrounded by charts, compasses, spirit-levels, spirit-flasks, and other scientific appliances, readily agreed to explain his plans.

"'We propose,' he said, 'to discover the Isle of Wight. We believe it to lie somewhere about Lat. 50° 40' N., and Long. 1° 30' W. Greenwich. We shall embark at Southampton, and if the wind favours us we hope to make our destination in a little over an hour."

"'And what will be your next step?'

"' We shall probably anchor off Cowes, and land. We wish to see the famous regatta which is said to be held at that spot. We also aim at ascertaining which is the best hotel in the place, and whether it possesses a decent billiard-table. One of my companions, a litterateur of distinction, proposes to study the maidens of the region, of whom he has received favourable accounts. Our fellow-voyager, who is interested in fauna, will direct his attention to the question of whether the natives are acquainted with the racehorse and its properties. He hopes to ease them of a certain quantity of golddust as the price of fuller knowledge on this subject.'

"'Then I may take it that your expedition is intended to promote the interests of science?' queried our representative.

"'Most decidedly. We shall spare no pains to procure trustworthy information about the island. It is our ambition to circumnavigate it. We mean to explore its creeks and harbours, and to lay down a chart of the coast showing the piers, and indicating on which of them there are bands at night. We shall also report on the most suitable spots for bathing,

with special reference to the vexed question of the sexes bathing together.'

"'Ahem! Have you any other point you wish to emphasise?'

"'I should like it to be known that we look forward to our discoveries opening up a new field for mission work. We are in communication with the Foreign Missionary Society, which takes a warm interest in the expedition, though it has not yet seen its way to give us financial support.'

"'I understand. You will, of course, give the result of your labours to the world?'

"'Yes. It is my intention to keep a log of the voyage, and on my return I shall publish a work which I hope may in time become the recognised class-book on the subject in our Bcard Schools and Universities. Did you say Scotch.—?'

"We regret that the remainder of our representative's notes have been accidentally obliterated."

Encouraged by this universal approval, I wrote just before we started to the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, placing our project before him, and enquiring whether there were any chance of his Society contributing towards the expenses. It is unpleasant to be obliged to mention that the response from that learned body was distinctly unsympathetic. The Secretary's letter barely kept within the bounds of courtesy.

"SIR"—it began—"I have laid your communication before the Committee of the Royal Geographical Society, and I am directed to inform you that your application for a grant cannot be entertained for one moment. You appear not to be aware

that the geography of the region which you propose to 'discover' is already perfectly well-known, and that the island in question is in communication with the mainland by five daily services of steampackets which run in connection with the L. & S.W. and L.B. & S.C. trains. I note your offer of a chart, but my Committee does not anticipate that your explorations will render necessary any large number of corrections in the excellent map already published by Messrs. Smith & Son, which may be obtained at any of their bookstalls at the price When I add that two of the most respected Fellows of this Society have their residences on the island, you may perhaps realise that your proposal to investigate the 'manners and customs of the natives' has struck my Committee as little better than an impertinence. I am instructed to say in conclusion that if you really desire to earn their favour and support, my Committee would earnestly recommend you to turn your attention farther afield, and take as the goal of your expedition the site of the city of Jericho."

I print this letter in order to explain why the following pages come before the public in the present informal way. Although the Royal Geographical Society have thrown cold water upon it, I feel that to the learned world generally this narrative will be replete with interest of an altogether novel kind. It will at the same time teach the rising generation that the days of British pluck and endurance are not yet over, and impress them with a firm belief in the greatness of our Empire.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



ON HANDWRITING.

Drawn by J. Thompson.

She.—"Dr. Allswell writes the most illegible hand. His prescriptions are like Chinese puzzles. I wonder the chemists are able to make them up."

He.— Well, they don't always. I know one who takes them to the Box Office at the Gaiety Theatre, and they always give him two stalls without a murmur."

G 2

A STUDY IN FUTILITY.

" Are God and Nature then at strife, That Nature lends such evil dreams?"

BY J. SHAW MOR.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. CAMPBELL CROSS.

THE night nurse tapped at Gilroy's door. Gilroy had just gone to sleep, dead tired, at two a.m. He awoke with a deep breath and cried "Yes?"

"The child in No. 13 cot, whom you 'trachied' this afternoon, is breathing very badly. Sister says, will you please come at once! I have woke Mr. Graves."

Gilroy was a house-surgeon at St. Paul's Hospital. He had passed through his student years with distinction, and was commonly credited with that vague commodity called "a future." Certainly he was the cleverest man on the junior staff. He was popular with the other house-surgeons, for he was always ready to do another man's work; and he was also beloved by the Sisters, for he gave them credit for their experience, and was not above, on occasion, asking their advice. There was nothing bumptious about Gilroy.

He swung his legs out of bed at the nurse's call, and stood up, feeling a little



"The feather, please, Sister!"

faint and giddy. He passed a wet sponge over his face, then he slipped a Norfolk jacket and a pair of trousers over his pyjamas, thrust his feet into socks and slippers, twined a scarf around his throat, and started for the ward.

As he crossed the court between the junior staff quarters and the main buildings he felt himself a weary man. He was more than weary, he was worn out. For, in addition to his routine work, hard in itself, there had been long hours of research, pathological and clinical; compilation and tabulation; steady plodding in the library through the files of old notes, where the cases sought are so elusive; for his staff-surgeon, Sir Barnabas, was bringing out a new work.

However, his appointment was nearly at an end. He hoped soon to wander east away as surgeon to a P. and O. or Orient boat—a few months of rest before the next step up the ladder.

Now, as he trotted mechanically up the long flights to the diphtheria ward his legs felt yet half-asleep, but his head, trained by a long course of night calls, had become clear at once. He could hear Graves, the house-physician on duty, coming behind him. They entered together.

The gas was turned low, and the ward was filled with a vague blue semi-darkness, the windows showing faint green from the moonlight without, and the blinds barred with the shadows of the window-frames. Far down the ward was a ruddy glow of light round a cot, two forms bending over it. The night nurse was holding a lamp and the Sister was doing something with a feather.

"I am so sorry to have had to send for you, Mr. Gilroy, but you see how matters stand. I thought it best to send for you, too, Mr. Graves, as it was your case."

The patient was a little girl of seven or eight. She was lying with a pillow under her shoulders, head back, and hands clasping the bars behind. Her half-closed eyes were fixed on vacancy, and she took no notice of her surroundings. All the remaining energy of her system was concentrated on the effort to get air. In her throat was a tracheotomy tube, through which hissed a spasmodic respiration.

"The feather, please, Sister! 'Ah, I see; yes, a bit of membrane in the trachea! Forceps, please! No, I missed it! Let me see the chest, please, Sister."

Gilroy saw the ribs stand out at each inspiration, the breathing meanwhile growing weaker. The heart was fluttering against the chest-wall like a caged bird. The child's face was getting blue, the lips livid: the nostrils were working like the nostrils of a wild animal.

"Where is the feather? The lamp a little lower, please, nurse! Eh?—yes, so she is, by Jove! Well, there is one thing left!"

Gilroy stooped quickly, and put his lips to the child's throat. There was a wheeze and a splutter, and then a noise like a tiny engine letting off steam.

"Forceps, please! Ah, here it is!"

The piece of membrane was secured, the child was saved.

"That will do now, she is breathing again all right. Lotion, please, nurse!"

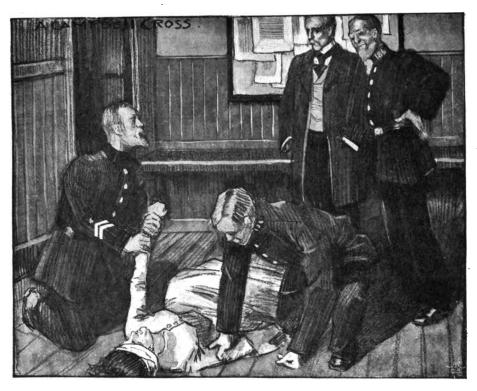
Gilroy dipped his face in the disinfectant, and washed out his mouth. Then he left the ward with Graves.

"Think you got rid of it all with that rinse?" asked the latter, rather anxiously.

"Oh, I think so," replied Gilroy.

"Anyway, if I do take it—subjective experience, you know! Very valuable!"

A few weeks later Graves was reading in *The Lancet* an orbituary notice of one Percival Gilroy, B.A., M.B., B.C. (Cantab), F.R.C.S., who had died of heart failure following diphtheria caught from a hospital patient. It told, in its semi-formal tone, of his achievements as a student; of the many scholarships and prizes he had won; of the great promise of his career; of the heroism of his death, and the wide-



"Susan Kingsman! I seem to know the name!"

spread regret among his colleagues at his loss.

Graves read it dreamily, for Gilroy and he had been closest of friends; and his death, so cruelly unexpected, so reckless a waste (as it seemed to him) of all that was rare and precious, had caused the iron to enter his soul. He felt at his heart the icy clutch of that dire philosophy which he had kept at bay so long, and which seemed to lie in wait for him at each episode of his hospital experience.

IT.

"Better send for Dr. Graves to have a look at her," said the sergeant.

The constable went off for the divisional surgeon, and presently returned with him.

"It's a woman, sir, drunk an' cut'ead." (From long use the descriptive phrase rolled as one word off the constable's tongue.) "She was run in this evening for

'd. and d.' along with a man named Lee she lives with. They was both drunk and fightin' like mad down Market Street. She fell an' cut 'er 'ead on the kerb. You'll get to know 'em soon enough, sir." (Graves' appointment was recent.)

It was a wreck of a woman lying before them in a drunken sleep. She looked two-and-thirty, but was probably ten years younger. Graves noted the puffy eyelids and coarse lips, the hair, clotted with blood, straggling on to the pallid cheeks, and the loathsomeness of her raiment. The whole aspect of the woman, from her drink-sodden face to her down-at-heel shoes, proclaimed a hopeless animalism.

But year-long familiarity with such bedraggled outcasts had weaned Graves from emotion and blunted his sense of Weltschmerz. He busied himself with dressing her wound, and then turned to the sergeant. "What is her name?"

"Well, sir, I believe it is rightly Susan Kingsman—'Slutty Sue' they call her about these parts."

"Susan Kingsman! I seem to know the name!"

Graves felt it awake a painful echo in his memory. Where had he heard it?

He looked again at the woman. Roused from her stupor, she was struggling, and cursing at the constables.

Suddenly the fastening at the neck of her bodice burst. The memory of a tragedy surged through Graves' brain, and with it came the memory of old ideals, and of the long-forgotten throes of intellect. But he showed no sign beyond a deepening of face-line.

"Pretty sight, ain't she, doctor? Here's your fee, sir, seven-an'-six!"

But Graves was looking at the woman's throat—at a queer, puckered depression in it, not unlike the exit-scar of a bullet wound.

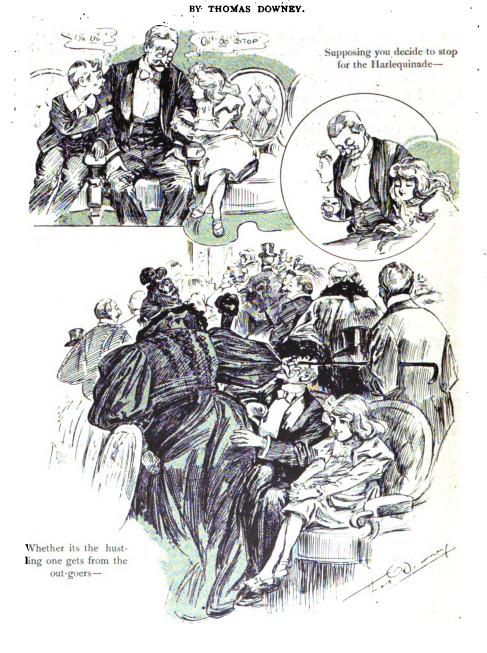
He felt himself again on the old battleground. There was a wild cry in his heart and a mutter on his lips—" My God, was it for this?"

Yet, as he went homeward through the night, there came to him an echo to his question, but with intonation altered—"Was it for this? Was it for this?"



THE PENALTIES OF PLEASURE.

SEEING THE CLOWN.





Or because the train home is so very late—

-Anyway, the clown does not seem so funny as he used to be!

One of the Photographs taken by Mr. John Le Couteur by special privilege from the Steps of St. Paul's Cathedral on the 22nd of June, 1897. Copies of this Photo, which has never before been reproduced, have been accepted by Her Majesty the Queen.



A CHAT WITH MR. JOHN LE COUTEUR.

BY CLIVE HOLLAND.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE, THE MOST HON. THE MARQUIS CAMDEN, COL. SIR VIVIAN MAJENDIE, THE HON. SIDNEY PARKER, AND JOHN LE COUTEUR.

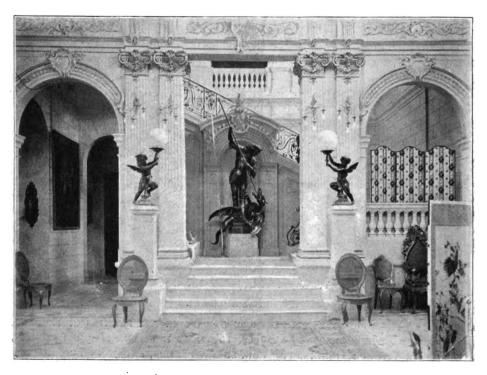
T almost the corner of Brook Street, Hanover Square and New Bond Street, in a lofty and handsome building. are situated the studios, rooms, and offices of The Photographic Association; the founder and director of which is the energetic and resourceful Mr. John Le Couteur. With the "knights and ladies of the Camera"-for the former have long ago found able colleagues and rivals in the latter-increasing each year in numbers, which must be a source of satisfaction to every camera-maker and platemaker in the United Kingdom, it is not much cause for wonder that an association which at first was confined to the few now embraces hundreds of amateurs of position and leisure.

Mr. Le Couteur is one more example of the truth of the maxim dans les petite sacs sont les bonnes épices; and even the dealing with between 25,000 and 30,000 amateur film and glass negatives per annum, and the printing of several times that number of photos, do not appear to have unduly taxed either his energies or good temper!

"To begin," exclaimed Mr. Le Couteur, smiling, "ask what you like." "We have no photographic secrets here, and any other sort of secrets there may be are—'cabinet' ones or not worth telling."

"Then may I ask first of all what caused you to first devote your attention to Photography?"

"Quite an accident. Some twenty-five years ago—just after the Franco-Prussian War—I was reading for my examinations as a surgeon. One day a friend of mine, who was also reading, but for the Bar, came in and told me that he had bought a photographic outfit, which in those days, when the 'dry plate' was in its infancy, was a cumbersome affair. In a word, he could make nothing of the thing, and—delicate flattery—knowing my scientific turn of mind, and," added Mr. Le Couteur with a dry smile, "being hard up (which he did not say) he thought I



Entrance Hall of Sir Edward Malet's Villa at Monaco.

(Taken by HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BEDFORD.)

might like to try what I could do. I was welcome to the whole bag of tricks for a couple of pounds. Put thus upon my mettle, I thought I must try; so I bought or borrowed (I really forget which) the apparatus, and sallied forth the next half-holiday in company with my brother to take photographs. Of course, we did not trouble ourselves to read the book of instructions enclosed, as we had seen photographers take pictures before, and the whole operation seemed to consist of sticking your head under a velvet cloth, pulling out the slide, and taking off the cap of the lens with as much empressement as possible. We took all the pictures we could; it is not improbable that we exposed some of the plates more than once, and returned home to acquaint ourselves with the results of our labours."

"The result was?" I asked eagerly.

"Imperceptible!" replied Mr. Le

Couteur with a laugh. "A result," he hinted, "which may not be unconnected with our exposing the plates to the influence of daylight. We placed the yellow pieces of glass carefully away, and looked next day for the exquisite photos we imagined we had succeeded in taking."

"Did you afterwards read the instructions, Mr. Le Couteur?"

"Yes; and with the purchase of a quarter-plate apparatus, which, by the way, my brother to this day has and uses, I forthwith took up photography, and more especially the chemical and scientific part of it, in earnest."

The speaker continued, "It was the Duke of Newcastle who first suggested the idea of our association to my mind. His Grace, to whom I had had the privilege of giving some hints, expressed his belief that an extension of the kind



Lord Rossmore's Son.

(A Photographic Study by IIIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.)

of work I was doing would prove popular, and at the same time a valuable assistance to many amateurs. Three years ago there were possibly not half the number of amateur photographers in England that there are to-day, but there were still enough to lead one to hope that an association such as I had planned would meet with a satisfactory and a financial success.

"In pursuance of this idea I took several rooms in the present building, and with

the kind assistance of several amateurs of note. to whom I had already given instruction in photographic matters, I started the association. In the first week some 40 members were enrolled, and since then the association has grown literally by leaps and bounds."

"You advertised?"

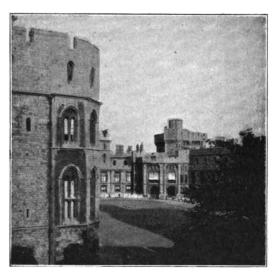
"Never. That is what I have not done, and never intend to

do. The association, which now numbers quite 1,000 members, has grown strictly on the 'snowball' principle. One member has introduced another, and so on, till, within a year of the founding of the society, I had to look for other rooms in the building to keep pace with the demands the rapidly increasing business made upon our resources. Now we practically have the whole building, and with the works now rapidly approaching completion at Hendon, we shall be able to undertake every kind of process and photograhic work both for members and also for outsiders."

"Your members are chiefly amateurs of the Upper Ten Thousand, I believe?"

"To a large extent that statement is correct. You see, the nucleus of the association was formed of titled and other distinguished amateurs, to whom I had either given lessons or with whom I had come in contact while doing so, or while pursuing my studies in Chemistry and Scientific Photography, and as I did not advertise the existence of the association by any of the usual methods, but

permitted it to grow by personal introductions, the natural consequence has been that the general public are not members. Of course, I have had some amusing experiences with people who thought either that I was: a jobbing photographer, or one who was dying to impart what I know about photography to the man in the street. Some time ago



Snapshot from Sir Fleetwood Edwards' private room at Windsor Castle, showing the Indians from the Indian Exhibition parading before the Queen.

(Taken by COL. SIR VIVIAN MAJENDIE.)

a lady came in and wished me to take her photograph "in the ordinary way of business, as she understood that I made very good pictures." It took some considerable time, I can assure you, to persuade her that I was speaking the truth when I told her that I didn't do this sort of work at all. Another time I was somewhat startled by the entrance, unannounced, of an elderly lady and a somewhat seedy-looking young man, both of them evidently from the country, and equally evidently tricked out in their Sunday things. It appeared that by some



The Countess Clary and the Countess Kinski in Fancy Costume as Napoleon's Sisters, for the Duke of Devonshire's Ball.

(Taken by The Photographic Association, 16, Brook Street.)

roundabout way the young man had heard I gave lessons in photography, and wished for instruction. He incidentally mentioned that he had bought a photographic business very cheap, somewhere in Somersetshire, I think, and as he did not like the drapery line he thought photography would suit him better. I asked him if he knew anything about the subject. 'No,' he replied, with easy assurance, 'I can't say I do; but I thought as I was up for a few days in London you would tell me what I should have to do:' adding that his mother wouldn't mind five guineas if I could put him on the right track. I need scarcely add that I did not attempt the task of transmuting in a few days the sometime draper's assistant into the fashionable photographer of that particular Somersetshire town."

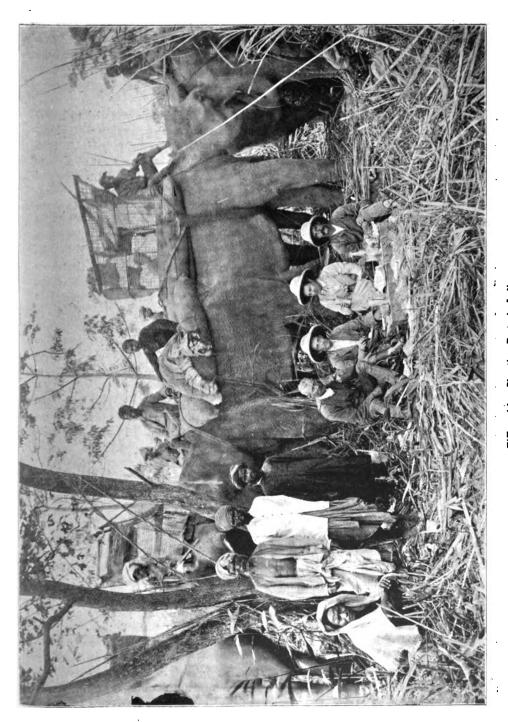
"Certainly," said Mr. Le Couteur, after a pause, "I can give you the names of a few of the first members, but you must understand that it will have to be a very incomplete list, as you would be tired of putting down the names of those joining during the first year of the association's existence, long before I should have reached the end. others, however, I may mention one English Princess, who by the way, turns out some admirable child and animal studies, and is a really clever 'Kodaker'; the Duke of Newcastle, the Duchess of Bedford, Lady Mary Grosvenor, the Hon. Colonel Bouverie, Colonel Sir V. Majendie (of dynamite explosions fame), Lady Hill, Lady Constance Butler, the Hon. Mrs. Irby, Count Palffy (Austrian Diplomat), Lord Camden, the Baronne de Brienen, and Miss Marie Corelli, who uses her camera, as do many other lady members, as one would a note-book, recording places she has visited and incidents which have commanded her attention."

"Yes, of course," continued the speaker in reply to a fresh question, "many of the members of the association have their likes and dislikes as regards plates, apparatus, lenses, and processes of printing. One will swear by a Goerz, another by a Zeiss, and yet another by a Dalmeyer or Cooke. Then in the matter of printing processes, one member will see no virtue in anything save Platinotype, whilst another pins his or her faith to the Carbon process, which, by the way, I have succeeded in greatly simplifying. Oh, as regards lenses, a good lens is a good lens, whether bearing one name or another, or no name at all, for the matter of that."

"Some of your members, doubtless, devote themselves to special branches of photography?" I remarked whilst Mr. Le Couteur was searching for some photos with which to illustrate this interview.

"Why, certainly. More than one member of our Royal family is very fond of taking her own children's portraits, those of her friends, and of picturing dogs of all kinds. The Duke of Newcastle has especially devoted his attention to children and portrait work generally. Once, indeed, he was taken for a professional photographer by two Rugby boys, who asked him to take their photos, which his Grace did without divulging his identity. He sent the copies "with the Duke of Newcastle's compliments." And I can well imagine the youngsters' astonishment. Several members of the Royal Family are very skilful in portraiture, and, as you doubtless saw in papers, the Princess of Wales had her camera with her at Chatsworth the other day, and took photos of the shooting party. Earl Wemyss has devoted special attention to cloud photography. The Duchess of Bedford is fond of taking animals, and the Duke of Manchester of yachting subjects, Sir Vivian Majendie making specially good studies of St. Paul's choir boys. I could multiply the particular hobbies of prominent members almost indefinitely.

"With reference to the amount of work I do for different members. To speak definitely on this point is, of course, impossible. In a word, I and my assistants



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do what is required, be it little, be it much. Of course, with so large a membership, embracing amateurs in all parts of the world-oh! yes, Egypt, Afghanistan, Tasmania, Chili, Bermuda, Japan, Persia, Burmah, Egypt, New Zealand, Russia, almost everywhere-it would be absurd to pretend that all of them are capable of turning out good work, or even passable work unassisted. Some of them, indeed, are undoubtedly working under great climatic and other disadvantages to with. Plates will deteriorate, films become partially eaten by the ubiquitous white ant and cockroach; and much of the work sent home from countries having tropical climates needs the most careful handling, and an amount of resource in development, and printing of the negatives when finished, that you would scarcely credit. Some members literally do nothing beyond 'pressing the button,' and we do the rest, whilst possibly they pose as quite skilled operators. On the other hand, our aid is frequently only sought when time presses, the member seeking it being almost, if not quite, as capable as we are of obtaining the most satisfactory results from his or her own negative. I know that statements have been made that the members of the Royal Family, who are amateur photographers, know nothing about it, and that Mr. This or Mr. That does everything save actually expose the plate. My experience permits me to say this much: Some of the members of the Royal Family are quite capable of doing all the work had they the time, and that a leading characteristic of the Royal Family, as a whole, is the thoroughness with which they, as a rule, enter into anything they choose to take up. An example, which will occur to everyone, is the Princess Louise's skill as a sculptor. And a word more: anyone who can impart information to members of the Royal Family-from the Prince of Wales downwards-is treated with a consideration which many less exalted members would do well to imitate."

"But now a little of yourself and the work of the Association, Mr. Le Couteur," I said, as time was rapidly passing away.

"Very well, what do you wish to know? My chief work in connection with photography? That is easily told. I have always devoted a large amount of time to the scientific as well as to the mechanical part of the same. As a result I was enabled to invent a tube for use in some cases of internal operations, which fulfilled the requirements of medical science in a way that several eminent French authorities stated could not be done. Of that I am perhaps a little proud. Then, as I have before remarked, I have succeeded in making the exquisite carbon process in its several forms much simpler than it used to be, so simple, in fact, that any intelligent worker has no need to fear failure. Then I have done a good deal of work for the Governmental Offices (of which, however, I must not speak too particularly), and am now conducting some experiments which will, I hope, and firmly believe, end in our being able to explode mines at a distance of 2,000 yards or even more without the agency of a wire or any connection of that sort whatever. I am also devoting a good deal of time and attention just now to photographic survey work, by which it will, doubtless, be an easy matter to make an accurate survey of an enemy's country without geodetic instruments, and enable the authorities at home to prepare from photographs, with the greatest accuracy, maps and detailed plans of the districts so surveyed for the use of officers in the field. The value to travellers and pioneers of some simple method on these lines will be incalculable for the accurate determination of the route traversed."

"The X-rays," I next suggested.

Mr. Le Couteur smiled.

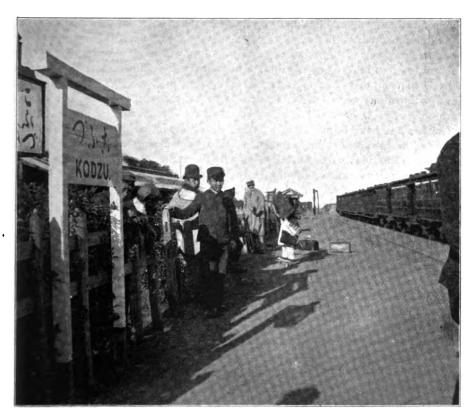
"I know a little about that also. In

fact, I have in the other room one of the most complete sets of apparatus for X-ray observations in London, and I am frequently summoned to the different hospitals to superintend X-ray work of importance, which, however, does not assist me to grow rich, as I do it for the love of science and humanity. The first X-ray

hospital authorities and medical men in difficult cases."

"You still give lessons?"

"Certainly. And I may add there is little which comes out of any value in any part of the world which is not known to us here, and at once communicated to those of our members who are likely to be



Kodzu Station, Japan.
(A Snapshot by the MOST HON. THE MARQUIS CAMDEN.)

photo I took of any importance was a radiograph of the Prince of Wales's hand, to the publication of which, for the benefit of Guy's Hospital, his Royal Highness at once gave a most gracious and willing permission. I have made several minor discoveries in connexion with the Rontgen Rays, and have every possible appliance likely to ensure ease and accuracy of work on the premises at the disposal of the

either benefited or interested by the discovery. We have correspondents in most of the large towns of Europe, and more especially in scientific centres. Our Paris branch is the Comptoir General de Photographie in the Avenue de l'Opera, where our members, when in the French capital, are at liberty to go and obtain any information they may require, as well as materials."

"Not so very long ago I received an order from one of our members, who was rushing off at a moment's notice to Afghanistan, to get him a complete set of apparatus packed within a few hours. Everyone was set to work buying the necessary things, packing, &c., and by dint of exerting ourselves we managed to have all ready in time. The member for whom all these preparations had been made did not understand the working of the camera and some of the accessories, and so I had to jump into the train with him, and tell him all that was necessary for him to know whilst we were being whirled down to Dover. I crossed the Channel to Calais; but have been amply repaid by seeing a picture of the gentlemen in one of the illustrated weeklies-at work. Of curious experiences of that kind I have had several in my time, and not a few photographic 'doubles' and ghost pictures have been brought me for elucidation by astonished mem-

As was, perhaps, but natural, a reference was made to the animatograph.

"I believe," said Mr. Le Couteur, in reply to a question, "that the invention has a great future before it, and I confidently look to its becoming a very valuable means of recording in a permanent and vivid form historical events. Demeny's apparatus, which I am interested in perfecting, reduces the objectionable 'flicker,' even with the smallest picture, to a negligible amount, which will add greatly to the comfort of the audience, and the clearness of the pictures. I think the next year or two will witness great strides in this branch of photographic projection."

As I was about to inspect the commodious premises with studios for photography by both natural and artificial (Maloni) light, Mr. Le Couteur produced a magnificent print of the photo (reproduced on page 92), he himself took on Jubilee Day from his special sentry-box-like erection on the steps of St. Paul's.

It is claimed to be the finest photo of Her Majesty secured on that ever-to-beremembered occasion, and the taker of it is not a little proud that it met with the warm approval of the members of the Royal Family, and that every crowned head in Europe possesses a copy.

Speaking of Jubilee Day, Mr. Le Couteur said, with a smile at my astonishment, that he personally expended at the three points where he himself, or his operators were stationed, not less than f_{200} in animatograph films. As to the total amount expended by the thousands of amateur and professional photographers on that day he said it was impossible to estimate. Film and plate-makers were worried to death by the unprecedented demand, and stocks which would ordinarily have sufficed the retail dealers for months vanished in a few hours. "Anyway, it is safe to say," replied Mr. Le Couteur, "that very many miles of film must have been used, and that thousands of plates must also have been exposed." It is possible that the plates used would have paved the area of St. Paul's.

"One last question. Do you consider photography an expensive hobby?"

"That depends wery much on what you spend," was the answer. "If one is careful, it is possible to get a good deal of pleasure and profit out of photography at a comparatively small cost. But most of the members of the association do not have to consider ways and means, and more than one I know must spend as much as £800 to £1,000 a year on their hobby. And let me remark that in times past a good deal of cold water has been thrown on amateur work, but nowadays some of the finest work accomplished is done by amateurs. Most improvements have been the result of the experiments of amateur photographers. Professionals, as a rule, have been very slow in the past to adopt improvements of any kind, and few of the professional photographers have

either the time or inclination to make experiments. Of course, there are a few exceptions, but what I have said is true of the majority. I have great faith in the really intelligent and earnest amateur worker, and I look to such for most of the advancement which we may see during the next few years. Whatever may be said to the contrary, coloured photography has not yet been discovered,—that is to say, the art of photographing in natural colours,—though I do think that we are on the verge, perhaps, of discovering how to treat the prints themselves so that they develop, as it were, the natural primary However, before that will be discovered I shall probably have long ago placed on the market a system of colouring photographic prints which will put into the shade all other methods for beauty, accuracy, and transparency, and will preserve the very texture of the stuffs of draperies, &c."

The beautiful specimens of photographic colouring which Mr. Le Couteur showed me, and which he said represented only a few minutes' intelligent work on each large print, placed beyond contradiction his assertions. And before long the public who are interested in such matters will doubtless be in a position to judge of the artistic value of the new discovery. And as I left the interesting personality who forms the subject of this interview, I felt assured that what was worth knowing about photography and photographic science could be learnt of Mr. Le Couteur and his able assistants.

The few photos lent me for reproduction, Mr. Le Couteur impressed upon me, should not be taken as in any way representing the quality or excellence of amateur work; they are intended merely to illustrate the interesting diversity of the subjects which pass through his hands.



WANDERINGS IN BOOKLAND.

BY PERCY CROSS STANDING.



was in Christmas week that the Messrs. Isbister added "Lincoln Cathedral," by the Rev. Edmund Venables, M.A., late Canon of Lincoln, to their exquisitely

dainty series of English Cathedrals, most of the drawings for which have been executed by Mr. Herbert Railton. makes the thirteenth volume of the series, every one the loving work of a different hand, and in each case the hand of an eminent Churchman. Thus, "Westminster Abbey" was contributed to the series by the practised hand of Dean Farrar (if only Dean Stanley had been alive for the purpose!); "York Minster," by Dean Purey-Cust; "Canterbury," by the Dean of Ripon; "St. Paul's," by Canon Newbolt; "Norwich," by Dean Lefroy; "Gloucester," by that erudite and eloquent historian, Dean Gloucester; and so on, and so on.

Let it at once be recorded that, however charming and attractive its precursors may have been, Canon Venables' appreciation of the Cathedral of Lincoln yields to none of them. Touching his subject with a rare sense of reverence, the Canon takes us out of the living present into the dead past, over the daisied graves of vanished priests and prelates. Indeed, to anyone who knows old-world Lincoln at all, there cannot be a more delightful study than Canon Venables' letterpress enriched with Mr. Railton's art. For the reverent desire is ever sweet, and somehow both author

and artist have brought to their task an altogether pleasing sense of fitness. There is never a jarring note. Step by step the author takes us from the first foundations of "the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lincoln," when, at the time of the Norman invasion of England, Remigius, the famed Almoner of the Abbey of Fécamp, presented the Duke of Normandy with a ship and two score men as his contribution towards the enterprise. As Canon Venables says, surely neither of the parties could have anticipated that " one fruit of the offer would be the erection of a cathedral which, even in the founder's days, was to hold high rank among the minsters of the newly-conquered land. . . Remigius embarked with his fighting men, landed with his chief at Pevensey, and, if not with his arms-which is by no means unlikely--certainly by his words, influenced and contributed to the Norman victory. It will be remembered that Harold's English forces are reproached with having spent the night before the battle in drinking and singing, while the Normans spent their night in listening to the religious exhortations of the bishops and other clergy, and in prayer and the confession of their sins. Of these exhorters, Remigius was one. His reward was not long in coming. year after the Conquest Wulfwig, the English bishop of the vast Mercian diocese which had its 'bishop's stool' - as our forefathers called it - at Dorchester-on-Thames, died, and his see was bestowed on Remigius. Contemporary chroniclers present us with his portrait: dwarfish in stature, dark in complexion, undignified in aspect. 'Nature,' says William of Malmes-

bury, 'seemed to have formed him to show that the noblest spirit might dwell in the most wretched body.' Discontented with a cathedral planted in a small village at the extreme southern end of his diocese, he obtained William's licence to

transfer his see to Lincoln-the 'Lindum Colonia' of the Romans, hoary with an antiquity of near a thousand years. There, having purchased the site from the burghers, he at once began to build a cathedral on the hill-top—in the words of Henry of Huntingdon, almost his contemporary-'Strong as the place was strong, fair as the place was fair, as acceptable to the servants of God who were to minister in it as was secure from the attacks of all enemies.' Begun about 1074, the church was ready for consecration in

(Drawn by Herbert Railton. By Permission of Messrs. Isbister.) 1092. The 9th May was fixed for the rite. Rufus had summoned all the prelates and great lords of the realm to the ceremony, which was to be of the grandest. did not take place. Three days before the day fixed, the founder of the church breathed his last, to find a grave in the still unhallowed fane."

Such were the beginnings of the splendid fabric which adorns old Lincoln Hill to-day. Canon Venables' terse narrative of its chequered growth glows and grows as he proceeds; but I think I have quoted enough to show that felicity

of phrase and quotation, with facility of diction, constitute not the least of its claims-enough, too, to induce readers to echo the author's concluding wish that "what we have told may induce many to visit Lincoln for themselves." Ishould like, all the same, to present my readers with one example Canon Venables' happy knack of dressing great truths in new and beautiful forms "The law of our being is," he says, "that the more we give the more we love; the more we forget ourselves in the service we Illustration from "Lincoln's Cathedral." render the happier the render-

> vice becomes and the richer its fruit." Is not this equally true of other loves besides the love of the Infinite? I think it is.

> Let publishers and critics say what they will in its disfavour, the vogue of the Birthday Book somehow fails to die out. On the contrary, it takes new lease of life with

ing of that ser-

the issue of Miss Myra Hamilton's The Pinero Birthday Book (Heinemann). As lovers of his plays will perhaps guess, this dramatist lends himself admirably to the fell purposes of the Birthday Book compiler. In Lieut. Mounteney-Jephson's The Story of a Billiard-Ball (Saxon & Co.) we find Mr. H. M. Stanley's trusty lieutenant "through Darkest Africa" in different and very much lighter vein. Those who only know Lieut. Jephson from

pavement below. Alas! for that little flaw within me, I lay cracked and useless at their feet. But they heeded me not as I lay there, for with the rapture of that first embrace forgetfulness had come over their senses, a darkness had fallen upon their eyes; for a long moment they knew nothing, they saw nothing—the glimpse of Paradise had blinded them. But soon they recovered themselves with a deep-drawn breath, and moved shyly apart, for



Illustration from "The King's Story Book."
(By Permission or Messrs. Arch. Constable & Co.)

his vivid descriptions of personal adventure and hardship in Equatorial Africa—he was a contributor on these subjects to the last volume of The Idler—will be agreeably surprised to find that he can tell a pretty story prettily. The billiard-ball, whose autobiography this is, traces its own development from the tusk of an elephant to the roundness and whiteness of a sphere in the game of cannons. And this is how the *dénouement* comes about: "With a sudden start she turned, and I fell from her hand, with a crash upon the

each saw in the other's eyes the knowledge which that first embrace had given them. They stirred uneasily, and looking down they saw me lying there cracked upon the pavement at their feet. With an exclamation of sorrow Ethel picked me up, and she and Gerald turned me over and over with many expressions of regret. Then his hands closed over hers as she held me, and I lay there for some moments closely folded round in the clasp of their throbbing hands."

The name of Mr. Laurence Gomme

was pleasantly associated in my mindprincipally as a noted folk-lorist-long ere the appearance of The King's Story Book (Constable), which he has ably edited "for the young reader." But it is obvious that readers of an older growth will live to dote upon a collection of historico-romantic "gems" varying from Lord Lytton's description of King Harold's death at Hastings to Harrison Ainsworth's account of Wyatt's fight for the Crown on behalf of poor Lady Jane Grey; from Miss Manning's eloquent tale of the trial and end of Sir Thomas More, to Charlotte Brontë's tale (from Shirley) of "the new warfare" under William IV.; from Mary Shelley's Last Stand for the White Rose, to Kingsley's magnificent description of the over-Questions of throw of the Armada. "copyright," the editor frankly owns, precluded the inclusion within the covers of this work of fragments such as Louis Stevenson's story of The Black Arrow, and Conan Doyle's narration of Monmouth's Rout at Sedgmoor; but even without these we have much to be grateful for in the five hundred varied pages embraced by The King's Story Book. Mr. Gommewho not long ago, by-the-bye, edited a new and pretty edition of Lytton's Harold (Constable)--contributes a preface, in the course of which he thus describes the rule which he has followed:—"In selecting the stories two rules have been observed: first, that so far as possible the events described shall be real events, or else faithful representations of events which, if not real, illustrate each reign. No event treated of in historical romance is nearer to truth than Lytton's account of the battle of Hastings. . . . The great fight by Hereward at Ely is another instance of close following of history, so far as history in this case speaks at all; and in these two great fights is contained so much of the heroic that they may fairly be considered as the fitting opening to the English epic." It is almost needless to state that Mr. Gomme has not failed to

lay the Bard of Avon under contribution. He has, in fact, lifted from Shakespeare four scenes, these being the "Magna Charta" scene from King John, "The King is dead, long live the King!" scene from Henry IV., the battle of Agincourt from Henry V., and the Princes in the Tower from Edward V.

Quite an event of the literary month has been the issue of Mr. Archibald Forbes' valuable Life of Napoleon III. (Chatto). As my readers will remember, The Idler exhibited its appreciation of this biography by publishing it serially, and I may refer to the book again. Mr. Forbes has made only slight alterations in revising the text for book form. Mr. Nisbet Bain's Peter the Great (Constable) was hurried on in order to be produced at a suitably psychological moment.

Apropos of the interest that is being manifested in things Russian, Mr. Fred Whishaw tells me that he regards his new novel At the Court of Catherine the Great, which begins in this number of THE IDLER, as the strongest thing he has yet done. I have been privileged to read the MS., and I can say that it is a most readable and fascinating story. Indeed, it seems to me that when Mr. Laurence Irving wants to take another dramatic theme from Russian history, there is one all ready to his hand in the life and times of Catherine, that extraordinary combination in one person of a light woman and a great statesman. While I am speaking of this novel, which readers of THE IDLER will soon have an opportunity of judging for themselves, I feel I must add a word upon the remarkable art which Mr. Whishaw has shown in dealing with the very formidable difficulties that encounter the novelist seeking to situate a good honest true-love romance in such a milieu as the Court of the Great Catherine. who reads these words will understand what I mean when I say that details of the life at the Russian Court of that period would be wholly unsuitable for the

pages of a popular magazine. Fortunately they are also wholly unnecessary for the artistic construction of Mr. Whishaw's romance, and, as it were, to secure this without sacrificing historic truth, he has most skilfully selected for narrator a modest and high-minded girl, whose outlook upon the life around her is that, therefore, which is placed before the reader. The heroine Elsa,—as many

another maiden has to do, and all should—has to learn that there is evil in the world, and if the reader cannot overlook the vice and the corruption that exist side by side with her devotion and honesty, Mr. Whishaw's art allows them to be felt only as a lurid background, setting into relief all the more powerfully and dramatically the true and loving hearts of the couple before the footlights.



THE VEILED MAN:*

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THE RISKS AND ADVENTURES OF SIDI AHAMADOU, SHEIKH OF THE AZJAR MARAUDERS.

BY WILLIAM LE QUEUX.

ILLUSTRATED BY WARWICK GOBLE.

V.—THE COMING OF ALLAH.



NE breathless evening, when the golden sun had deepened to crimson, and the shadows of the rocks were lengthening upon the white furnace of the sands, an alarm spread through our camp

that strange horsemen were riding hard down the valley in our direction. Marauders that we were, fierce reprisals were of no infrequent occurrence, therefore the women and children were quickly hurried out of the way, the camels tethered, and each man gripped his spear, prepared to resist whatever onslaught might be made.

Along the Wady Ereren, six days' march south of the town of Ghat, where we were at that time encamped, we had taken the precaution to post three men in order to give us warning in case of any projected attack by the Kel-Alkoum, the powerful people with whom we were at feud on account of the murder of one of our clansmen up in the north of Fezzan. Our outposts, however, had sent us no word, therefore the only conclusion was that they had been surprised and killed ere they could reach us.

Hearing the news, I clambered up the bank of the ancient dried-up watercourse, in the bed of which we had pitched our tents, and, looking across the bend, we saw four dark specks approaching. The eye

of the Tuareg is as keen as that of the eagle, for, living upon plunder our intelligence becomes so sharpened that we somehow instinctively scent the approach of the stranger long before we see or hear him. In a few moments the men crowded about me for my opinion. Tamahu was dead, and this occurred in the first year of my chieftainship of the Azjar.

"Let all four be captured and brought to me," I said, my eyes still fixed upon the approaching figures. "If they resist, kill them."

In an instant twenty men, dark and forbidding in their black veils, sprang into their high-backed brass-mounted saddles, and with their gleaming spears held high, ready to strike, swept away down the valley to meet the new-comers.

Half an hour passed anxiously. The women in the rear chattered excitedly, and the children held back by them, rent the air by their cries. From where I stood I was unable to witness the meeting of our men with the strangers, but suddenly the sound of firearms reached our ears. Then I felt assured that the mysterious horsemen must either be the advanceguard of some valuable caravan from Algeria, or of an army from the north. Yet again and again the guns spoke forth, and so rapidly that I feared for the safety of our men: but at last there was silence deep and complete, and when I descended to the camp I found a tumultuous excite-

[·] Copyright, by William Le Queux, in the United States of America, 1898.

ment prevailing. The four men, escorted by those who had gone to arrest them, were still carrying their guns, and as they slipped from their saddles before me, smiles broadened their unveiled faces.

I looked at them puzzled. It seemed as though the firing had been but powder-play.

"Behold! O Ahamadou our Sheikh! We are thy kinsmen, yet thou hast sent to attack us!" they exclaimed.

"Our kinsmen!" I cried, noticing that they wore the white burnoose of the north, with their haiks held around their heads by ropes of twisted camel's hair. They wore no veils, and a Tuareg is unrecognisable, even to his relatives, if his black litham be removed.

"Yea," cried one, the elder of the four.
"Lend us a veil, and we will show thee."

A strip of black cotton cloth was thrust into his hand by one of the crowd, and he assumed it, twisting it deftly as only a Tuareg can. Then he turned and faced the onlookers, who with one accord laughed immoderately, hailing him a Taghma, son of Ifafan. Then the other three assumed the veil, and were, one by one, recognised and received back by their relatives.

At the conclusion of this strange ceremony, Taghma turned to me explaining how long ago before Ramadan they had wandered afar with their flocks to the oasis of Ezirer, and were there taken captives by the Kel-Alkoum.

"But," he added, "we have seen with our eyes the greatest wonder on earth. Allah himself hath come down from heaven!"

"What?" I cried, starting to my feet. "Thou liest!" The sensation caused by the man's calm announcement was intense.

"If my tongue uttereth falsehood, O Sheikh! then let it be cut out," he said. "I have seen Allah, the One. He guideth the Kel-Alkoum our enemies, and we are of a verity forsaken." "Ah!" wailed the old marabout Ajrab.

"Did I not warn ye that because of your inattention to your devotions and your neglect to say the five prayers, the One Merciful would leave you to perish and be eaten by the vultures like the lame camel in the wilderness?"

"Loose not thy tongue's strings," I commanded quickly. "Let us hearken unto Taghma, who hath seen the One from above."

"Of a verity, O Ahamadou!" answered the escaped captive, "we are lost, for Allah hath promised to render assistance unto the people he favoured in their expeditions. He declareth that we of the Tuaregs are the parasites of the earth, and that we shall be exterminated, not one being left. Truly he can render our spears as broken reeds, and our blades useless as rusted tin. Each day at the Maghrib he standeth beneath a baldachin of purple and giveth the people an assurance of his favour, while all fall down and kiss the hem of his crimson garment so that they may be blessed. In Salemma, El Had, El Guerat, and the villages around Gatron, he hath healed the sick and performed wondrous miracles, while before our own eyes hath he caused a great tree to rise from the bare sand—a marvel which no earthly being could accomplish."

"The latter thou hast thyself seen?" I enquired, much interested in this most remarkable statement.

"We have, O Sheikh!" he answered. "The face of Allah is in the darkness as a shining light. Verily the promise in the sûra is fulfilled. He hath come in person to lead the Faithful unto conquest."

Alone I sat in my tent that night smoking and pondering deeply over the strange report. In the camp the excitement had already risen to fever-heat. The aged Ajrah was addressing the crowd of men and women, urging them to earnest supplication. Allah had come, and would vent his wrath upon those who had dis-

carded His Book of Everlasting Will. From my divan I could hear the grey-bearded marabout's declaratory argument, and began to wonder whether the statement that Allah had descended upon earth had any foundation in fact. I confess to being sceptical. From the wailing of the women, and the low growls of the men, I knew plainly that the belief in the report must have a seriously disheartening effect upon our fighting-men who, if convinced that Allah assisted their enemies, would no doubt throw down their arms and flee.

I therefore saw that the statement of Taghma and his companions must be investigated, and after deep thought at length resolved to assume a disguise, and go myself to the camp of the Kel-Alkoum and see the miracles of which the men had spoken. To leave the Aziar without its Sheikh at such a time would, I knew, result disastrously; therefore calling together the marabout and three of the most trusted headmen, I secretly explained to them my intention, and told them to account for my non-appearance during the next few days by spreading the report that I was seized by a slight fever and confined to my tent.

Then, just before the waning of the moon, the dress that Taghma had worn was brought to me, and, assuming it, I mounted a fleet horse and set forth alone down the winding wady.

With the facts I had elicited from the four fugitives vivid within my mind, I journeyed forward, arriving ten days later in the little stone-built town of Zemnou, a cluster of white houses surrounding its small mosque capped by three thin white-washed minarets. Wearing as I did the correct garb of a tribesman of the Kel-Alkoum, my presence was unnoticed, and I was therefore enabled to stroll about the market-places and make my observations while pretending to bargain for goods I had no intention of purchasing.

At sunset each day, when the voice of the muezzin sounded from the minaret, "Allah is great!" I crossed to the mosque, washed my feet in the marble basin and entered, in the expectation of seeing the Ruler of Earth, but was each day disappointed. At that hour the surrounding terraces were peopled with white forms, which stood out against the summits of the palm-trees and the green of the baobab. Their backs were turned to the purple splendours of the dying light, for their faces looked towards the already darkened east, lighted for us by that eternal light in which Mecca is to be found. At length, after a week had elapsed, a great and excited crowd gathered in the market, and, when I enquired its reason, I learned that Allah was coming.

For an hour we waited in the full glare of the noon-day sun, until suddenly a shout of joy arose, and all fell upon their knees in adoration. Then, lifting my eyes. I witnessed for the first time the One Merciful in the flesh. Truly Taghma had not lied. He was of middle-age, a trifle pale, but his dark eyes had a kindly, sympathetic look, and his countenance was open and bright, a face such as is never seen on earth. In his robe of blood-red he stood with his head uncovered, and while the people about him kissed his feet and the hem of his robe, he stretched forth both hands over them, pronouncing upon them his blessing and an assurance of his favour.

One fact, however, struck me as curious. Abreha, the Sheikh, stood aloof, with arms folded, watching the scene from beneath his shaggy brows. The glare in his keen eye told me that within his heart he concealed a fierce jealousy that his power had thus been eclipsed.

The people, frantic with joy at the words of the Giver of all Good Gifts, cried aloud their praises, repeating their fatihat, and making open declaration of their belief. The scene was the strangest

and most exciting that ever I had witnessed for, carried away by their enthusiasm, many fell fainting, and were trampled upon by the crowd eagerly struggling to press Allah's garment to their lips and obtain the remission of all past sins.

Suddenly the tall, erect, imposing figure in blood-red, truly kingly, raised both arms above his head, and, in a clear voice that echoed across the market above the clamours of the wild perspiring crowd, commanded silence. In an instant one could have heard a cricket chirp. Every mouth was open in breathless eagerness, for Allah was about to speak to them, his chosen, with his own lips.

"Give ear, O my well-beloved!" he cried, with an accent unfamiliar. "Among ye have I come because ye have repeated your suras faithfully, and have believed in my Prophet. Of a verity will I bless you with abundant blessings, and the sun of my favour shall shine upon you so that your enemies may wither before the dazzling light shed by your faces. You, the Kel-·Alkoum, my beloved, shall sweep from the face of the earth the wicked who have oppressed ye, and their entrails will be burned by the all-consuming fire of my vengeance. The Tuaregs, those who hide their faces in veils because of the hideousness of their iniquities, ye shall put to the sword, and they shall be consigned to the place Al-Hawiyat, where their food shall be offal, and melting pitch shall slake their thirst. I am your leader, henceforward fear not, for ye have a stronger hand than all nations of the earth, and at my will all who oppose you shall be routed and die. The Kel-Alkoum, my chosen, shall rule the world."

He paused, and glanced round with an eye keen as a falcon's, while loud praises arose from every hoarse throat around. "We will rout the Azjar from their mountain fastnesses!" they cried. "We are ready at any moment to do thy bidding, and sweep away the wicked

Thou wilt give strength to our arms that none can resist. Be praised, O King of earth and heaven! Be praised, O One!"

A smile of satisfaction played about the lips of the red-robed visitant from the unknown, but, without further word, he turned and stalked slowly to the mosque, the excited crowd closing in behind him, rending the air with their adulatory cries.

Throughout many days I remained in Zemnou. Once I saw the mysterious visitant pass in the darkness, and, truly, his luminous face shone like a lamp. One morning, however, while wandering among the palms outside the town I met the Ruler of Earth walking alone, his head sunk upon his breast in pensive attitude. With his red cloak trailing heedlessly in the dust, he presented a decidedly dejected appearance. My footsteps startled him, and, raising his head quickly, he walked erect with his usual gait, apparently being desirous of concealing his debauch of melancholy.

"Praise!" I exclaimed, stopping, and bowing low before him. "If thou art, indeed, Allah, thou alone knowest the innermost thoughts of thy servant."

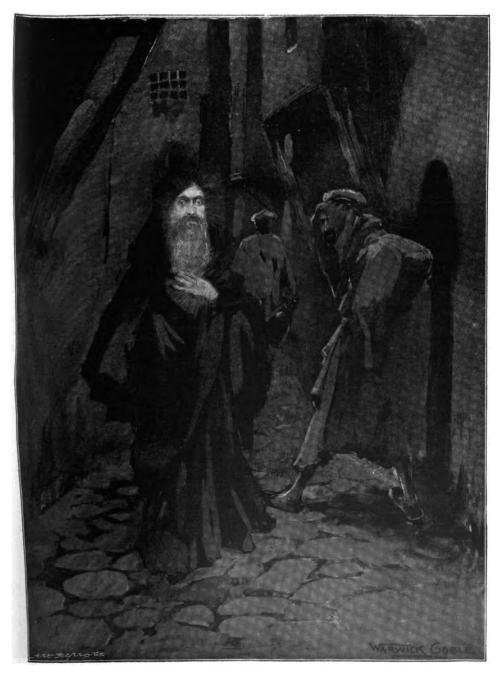
He paused, and stretched both his white tapering hands above my bowed head.

"Thy thoughts are of me," he answered. "Thou desirest speech with me alone. Speak."

So calmly he looked upon me that I was convinced that such a kindly, sympathetic face, with its expression of a sweet sadness, could not be human. Besides, had he not healed the sick, and caused trees to grow from out the desert sand? Yet a spirit of scepticism possessed me, and, scarcely knowing what words I uttered, I said:

"If thou art the mighty and wise One thou canst tell me my name, and whence I have come."

In an instant his brows knit, and his eyes flashed angrily.



Truly the Unknown's face shone like a lamp.

"Thou art an unbeliever, and one of my accursed. Thou, who darest to question my immutability and omnipotence, go dwell with Eblis, Ruler of Darkness, where maleficent spirits shall haunt thee, and the tortures of the flesh shell rend thee for ever. Begone!"

And drawing his robe about his shoulders, he moved forward with truly imperial gait.

At that moment I saw through the trees a pious fanatical crowd approaching. The news had evidently spread that the Allmerciful was walking in the outskirts of the town, and they had come forth to touch his garments, and receive his blessing. But when he saw them he halted, and, pointing towards me, cried:

"Lo! Yonder is one of the sons of Eblis, a scoffer and unbeliever. Let his body be given to the dogs."

Ere I could realise that the kind-faced man had condemned me to death, the mob, with loud yells of execration, rushed forward to seize me, and hurry me to an ignominious end. But in an instant I dashed in among the trees, and fled for life so quickly that I at length managed to out-distance my irate pursuers, and till evening I slept beneath the shadow of a rock. Then, determined to speak again with the Almighty One, I returned into the town, taking the precaution to purchase new garments to prevent recognition.

The All-powerful had aroused further suspicion within me by his embarrassment when I had questioned him, and by his anxiety that I should be killed ere I could utter denunciation. Without doubt, he possessed a mixture of firmness and independence which raised him above all prejudices, for he expressed his opinions to Abreha, the Sheikh, with the same frankness he employed towards the humblest tribesman; nevertheless, when we had spoken, I had detected a dramatic pose and an artificiality of manner which puzzled me. Again, at the moment

when I had addressed him, I had noticed, walking at some little distance behind him, a young girl of extreme beauty. She was unveiled, in the manner of the Kel-Alkoum, but somehow her face struck me as familiar, and I desired to again behold her. With that object I resumed my former quarters in the market-place, and kept watchful vigil. Next morning she came. Her face was paler than before, and it wore an anxious, terrified expression. enquired who she was, and was told that to all she was a mystery. Whence she came no one knew, but Allah had declased her to be one of his chosen, hence none molested her, or made enquiry.

I smiled, for I had recognised her. She was Mezouda, daughter of one of our fighting-men, who had been long ago captured by the Kel-Oui, and whose whereabout had remained unknown.

An hour later I contrived to have secret speech with her. At first she did not recognise me, but when I told her who I was, then she at once expressed her eagerness to return to her own people.

"Thou shalt return to our camp only on one condition, namely, that thou wilt induce that man known as Allah to accompany thee," I answered. "He is thy friend."

"But the Kel-Alkoum are his well-beloved," she said, using the same expression he so often used.

"He must forsake them," I observed, explaining to her the baneful effect the report had exercised upon our men of the Azjar.

But she shook her head. "No, he will not leave the Kel-Alkoum. He is already their ruler," she said. "The power of Abreha is now fast waning."

"Take me to him," I commanded.

"But his house is a holy place. None dare enter on penalty of being cast out for ever."

"I will risk it," I answered. "Guide thither my footsteps."

Reluctantly she led me through a

number of narrow, crooked streets, until she paused before a small mud-built hut, and pointed to it.

Without ceremony I pushed open its closed door, and, entering, discerned the great King, half-dressed, standing before a scrap of broken mirror combing his beard. His face and neck were brown, so were his hands, but his breast and arms were white! The sympathetic countenance and tapering fingers were ingeniously stained to match the colour of the men of the desert, but the remainder of his body showed him to be a European.

"How darest thou thus disturb my privacy, accursed son of Eblis?" he cried in anger, evidently recognising me as the one whom he had condemned to death on the previous day.

"I have entered in order to denounce thy profane chicanery," I answered boldly. "Thou, the self-styled Allah, art an infidel, an impostor, and a fraud!"

He started at my fierce declaration, for the first time recollecting that parts of his chest, arms, and legs were exposed to my gaze. His face blanched beneath its artificial colouring, and his white lips trembled.

"Well!" he gasped, "and if thou hast discovered my secret—what then?"

"The people of the Kel-Alkoum shall be made aware of how completely they have been tricked," I answered, taking up a small pot, which I smelt, and found contained a preparation of phosphorus. This he had evidently used to cause his face to be luminous in the darkness.

"No!" he cried, "anything but that.

I would rather kill myself outright than
face the ferocity of these people."

"Then truthfully answer my questions,"
I said firmly, when I had explained to him
who I was, and the sensation caused in our
camp by the report of his assistance to our
enemies. "Whence comest thou?"

"I come from the land of the Roumis

over the great black water," he answered, suddenly casting off all cant and con cealment, "My name is Mostyn Day, and I am an English mining prospector. Long ago, while in my own country, I read of the ease with which the fanatical Arabs may be imposed upon by fearless and unscrupulous men who desire to obtain power over them; and, truth to tell, hearing that great mineral wealth existed in the country of the Kel-Alkoum, and knowing Arabic well, I conceived a plan to come here, announce myself as Allah, and obtain over the tribe such complete authority and control that I should either become their Sheikh or obtain a concession to exploit all the mines in this rich region. object was very nearly accomplished. Tomorrow there is arranged a great rising of the people against Abreha, with the object of declaring me their ruler, but "-and he paused sighing-"your discovery has put an end to it all."

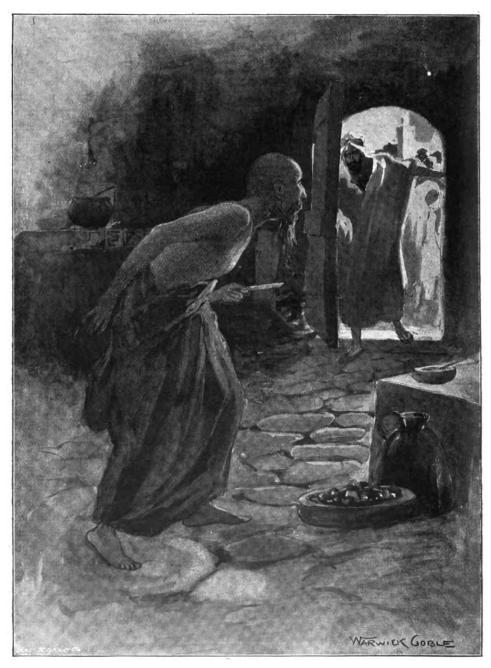
"But what of the miracles you have worked in various villages?"

"Mere conjuring tricks and sleight of hand," he laughed. "Once, long ago, I was connected with an English travelling show, therefore I am familiar with most stage tricks. But now I have confessed to you, you will not expose me? Remember, unless you allow me to fly these people will assuredly take my life."

"I will preserve silence on one condition only," I replied. "That to-night, an hour after sundown, you leave with me, journey to my encampment, and there exhibit to my people your painted face and arms, explaining to them the reason of your imposture, and showing them how you contrived to render your countenance luminous at night."

At first he demurred, but finding me inexorable he at length submitted, and asked to be allowed to take Mezouda with him.

"She is my wife," he explained. "I married her in Algiers two years ago, and by her aid alone have I been enabled to



" How darest thou thus disturb my privacy, accursed son of Eblis?"

approach so nearly the realisation of the plot I had conceived."

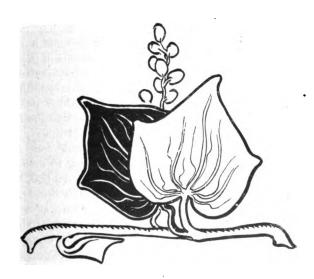
"It was truly an ingenious one," I laughed. "Yes, Mezouda shall go with thee. Remain in silence of thine intentions, and meet me among the palms outside the town an hour after sundown."

At first I feared that the intrepid Englishman, who had so nearly been the cause of a great Jehad through the whole Sahara, would endeavour to escape, but both he and his pretty and adventurous wife kept the appointment, and after some days we eventually arrived at our encampment.

The excitement caused by our appearance was unbounded. Taghma and his companions at once recognised the Englishman in his blood-red robe as the Allah of the Kel-Alkoum, and all fell on their knees, crying aloud in adoration.

But their supplications were quickly cut short by the few loud words of authority I uttered, and when half-an-hour later the reckless adventurer exhibited his stained face and hands, and then entertained them by showing the simple means by which he accomplished his tricks of magic, the air was rent by roars of laughter. The veiled warriors of the Azjar danced for joy, and held their sides when convinced how completely their enemies had been tricked, and how dejected they, no doubt, were when they knew that the Allah, in whom they trusted, had forsaken them without a single word of farewell.

For a month the ingenious impostor remained a guest within our tents; then he departed for the north, taking his wife Mezouda with him. But since that day the Kel-Alkoum, believing themselves the forgotten of Allah, have ever been a cowed and peaceful nation.



ON THE FUTURE OF NOVEL WRITING.

BY SIR WALTER BESANT.



T this present moment, while I write these lines, thousands of pens are flying over the paper in this Realm of Great Britain and Ireland,

in the United States of America, in every part of the British Empire, wherever our language is spoken. They are one and all engaged in the same occupation. The brains that guide them are, one and all, inspired by the same ambition—they are writing novels. writers long; they yearn; they pray that they, too, may join that band of novelists who are famous wherever the flag of the Stars and Stripes or the Union Jack flies. It is more than fame that they desire; it is the great, solid, undeniable golden success which accompanies the fame. They see humble clerks, little reporters, meek governesses, suddenly stepping to the front, and remaining there. They read how every successful novelist, without exception, worked his way up in this rapid fashion, and they think that they can do the same. Why not? Meanwhile they turn over the pages of the last success: they think that they understand the reason why it succeeded, and they return resolutely to their own attempt. have read how Henri Murger used to haunt the theatre continually in the hope, never achieved, of finding out how it In fiction there are Henri is done. Murgers by the ten thousand, all reading, analysing, noting, wondering how it is done.

Some twelve years ago I gave a lecture at the Royal Institution Albemarle Street,

"On The Art of Fiction." The day before I met James Payn. "My dear fellow," he whispered, in tragic tones, "for heaven's sake, don't tell 'em how it's done." I promised that I would not, and, in fact, I could not. Nothing is more true than the fact that a novelist is born, not made. Unless a man is born with the gift of arresting and holding the attention, as the Ancient Mariner held the Wedding Guest, he cannot become a novelist. he has that gift, he may be vulgar, unskilful, foolish; but he is a novelist, and he will command a following. What can be taught, and must be learned, are the artifices of the craft; such as the art of construction, the use of dialogue, the rejection of things not belonging to the story, the use of selection. If a young writer would apply himself at the outset to learn the things that belong to the technique he would spare himself many failures and disappointments in the future.

The most remarkable feature, therefore, in the present condition of literature is the way in which the novel has spread itself, until it seems to be crowding out all other forms of literary expression. poetry appears but in tiny volumes, vainly seeking to assume importance by limiting the edition, as if it was not limited enough already. The minor poet presently appears as a novelist, and if he succeeds continues to be a novelist. The essay has almost disappeared. Now and then a volume of critical essays by Saintsbury or by Dowden appears; but they are not widely read. The essayist, as in the case of Louis Stevenson, abandons that branch of literature for the sake of the History belongs to education:

particularly the new history after the school of Freeman, which scorns the broad effects of the former historian and puts aside his sweeping summaries. for the drama, though one may number fifty remarkable and, one would think, lasting novels of the last fifty years, there has not been one single play which would be placed in the same line with She Stoops to Conquer or The School for Scandal. one word, the novel has attracted and continues to attract the brightest and cleverest literary work of the day; all the imagination which formerly went to the making of verse; all the observation which formerly equipped the essayist; all the dramatic force which formerly enriched the stage.

We have, in Anglo-Saxon lands, every kind of novel flourishing and in full flower. There is no sign, so far, of decay. New names spring up every year with new and promising work; the commercial side of fiction is equally satisfactory. It is now thirteen years ago since I first invited attention to this branch of the subject. then told the world that literature, if it was not a profession in which large fortunes were made, was no longer a beggarly profession. There were more than fifty followers of letters, I said, who made more than a thousand pounds a year. Great was the clatter over this simple statement. The young gentlemen of the Press were unanimous as to the absurdity of the statement. Of course, I knew what I was saying, and repeated it. Since then the income of successful writers has gone up by leaps and bounds. I could now name over a dozen whose incomes vary from three to four thousand pounds, while there are many who have long since passed the four figures. In other words, while the profession is itself the most delightful possible, the emoluments enable its successful followers to live at ease, make them independent of the publisher, and give to literature that dignity which material success confers.

It is this success on the commercial side which helps to attract the best and brightest of our young writers. Good work, good artistic work, is naturally produced when its success depends upon its worth: when the reward is meagre the work is scamped. Hence it is that at the present moment we have a dozen artists in fiction who at any time would have been acknowledged as belonging to the front rank. I do not claim that we have a Fielding or a Dickens, but I do claim that there never has been a time of a higher standard in fiction or with more men and women who have reached that standard. If it be asked what posterity will say to this man or that man, the answer is that posterity will pay only a moderate amount of attention to the novelists of the past, being too much taken up with her own novelists. examples of Lord Lytton, Douglas Jerrold, George Eliot, Charles Reade, and Wilkie Collins show pretty well how posterity will treat dead novelists. Some will be forgotten altogether. No one, for instance, now calls for the works of Lytton or Douglas Jerrold; of George Eliot two or three are still read; of Wilkie Collins and Charles Reade one or two only. selection of his books takes place immediately on the death of a novelist. or three are picked out and the rest stand uncalled for on the shelves. The popular novelist may, therefore, if he pleases, say with the poet, Non omnis moriar-"Some of me will remain." For my own part, I think that simply to have delighted his own generation is an achievement so wonderful, especially when that generation means a hundred million readers, that any man ought to be satisfied with it. Let it be written on my tomb: "His generation read his stories."

Outside the circle of popularity is a belt of semi-popularity; it is inhabited by a company who are either profoundly wretched or completely happy. They are novelists whose works publishers are

always ready to produce because they are quite certain to sell a whole edition, or more than a single edition, as the case may be. There are in all about four hundred living novelists. Of these a hundred belong to the belt of semi-popularity. They never achieve more than a qualified success; sometimes they do really fine work, but it is marred by something which estricts the popularity of the writer. One man, for instance, whom I could mention, writes admirable stories true to life, yet remains in the twilight of this belt. Why? Because his themes are always gloomy and depressing. Of some we ask in wonder why they have not stepped to the front in demand as well as in esteem. Of others we know that they write for a very limited audience of scholars and artists. Such was Walter Pater, whose Marius the Epicurean could never become a popular book. I have said that the novelists in this belt are either profoundly wretched or perfectly happy. The reason is that some are green with envy, and that others are inflated with the happiness of gratified vanity in getting up so high.

Outside and beyond this belt there is the crowd of those who have no popularity at all. They are the unhappy persons who pay for the production of their own books, or the equally unhappy authors whose works no one will buy, not even the circulating libraries. When you read of the enormous number of novels published every year, deduct, first, the vast number of the books which are born only to die, and you will find your numbers much more easy to handle.

Why do we lament the number of The thing to be books produced? lamented is the popularity of a bad book, not its appearance. Most bad books are bad by reason of feebleness; they die right away. It does not matter how many are printed; the critic need not review them; the bookseller will not stock them; the library will not buy them; the public will not read them. When the bad book succeeds it is time to cry out. But we have not yet exhausted the field of fiction. On every railway book-stall and on every news-vendor's counter there are piles of journals and magazines which furnish the world with a perpetual flow of novels and short stories. Thousands of perfectly obscure hands are continually engaged in producing this stuff; for the most part it has no literary value whatever; it is paid for at a miserable rate. Fifty pounds is considered a handsome honorarium for a story as long as, say, Treasure Island, while cases have been brought to my notice in which the miserable writer had to be contented with five pounds or even



A DIFFERENCE—WITH DISTINCTIONS.

BY AMY WOOD.

ILLUSTRATED BY JOSEPH SKELTON,



M—I'm the most miserable woman in the who—whole world!" she sobbed.

He carefully squeezed out a little rose madder

—anathematising its dearness the while —and put a bold touch of it on the ear. "Eh?" he said abstractedly.

She sobbed on, "I'm—I'm—," but no, it was absurd—how could she repeat that she was the most miserable? Surely the fact was obvious—and—and—he only said "Eh?" There was anger in her sobbing now, and it grew so persistent that at last he felt it wiser to stay it.

"Look here, Patty," he began patiently, "there is no use going over it all again. I didn't. If you won't believe me I can't help it."

It promised to be a very pretty quarrel indeed. She slowly raised her head from her arms, and as she looked woefully at him he noticed how the tears had clogged her long eyelashes together—also how well flushed cheeks went with a particular shade of brown hair. He hoped she would stay like that for a few minutes.

"But I saw you!" she said in an awestruck way.

He shook his head incredulously without meeting her eyes, then worked on hurriedly at one corner of the unfinished background.

She fumbled for her handkerchief.

"Don't move!" he cried incautiously.

From long habit she obeyed, but only or a moment. The next she had jumped

down from the little daïs with all her trouble in her eyes.

"You are horrible!" She flung out both hands with the palms downwards—a gesture peculiar to her when she wished to emphasise something extravagantly. "No, don't look like that," she continued hotly. "I'm not going to cry any more. I can see what you're doing. You thought it a fine opportunity to portray a woman in tears, but it's not your wife who will sit to you for that." Her voice broke in a dry little sob.

"Patty, dear, don't be so foolish." . He ought to have known better.

"You do me a great wrong, and then deny it; and then—then when you've broken my heart—and ruined my life"—the picture she drew of her misery brought the tears back again to her eyes with a rush—"then you call me foolish."

Again she fumbled for her handkerchief; and not being able to find it seemed to be another drop in the ocean of her trouble. "I shall not stay with you a minute longer. I shall leave you altogether. I shall go right away!"

She stumbled blindly to the door. As she passed him he caught her hand.

"Let me go!" she said chokingly.

" All right."

"But I'm your wife!"

He nodded.

"And-and I love you so, Dick!"

The pathos in her voice was hard to withstand. He came to the conclusion he couldn't withstand it.

He opened the door politely, and after she had gone out closed it as carefully. But he listened till he heard her footstep overhead in their bedroom. Then the brief look of anxiety left his face. "She is quite angry enough to have gone out into this pouring rain as she is," he muttered.

He went back to his canvas and looked at the dimpled face of his wife laughing out at him, and then in the corner at the It was Patty.

Her eyes were still red with weeping. but her face was quite pale. She had one of those absurd little bows on her hair which women call bonnets, and the thinnest and shortest of capes was on her shoulders. She had a small bag in her hand.

They looked at one another, and her



She picked them up delicately, with an air of disgust.

same face rapidly roughed in, with its tear-dimmed eyes and stained cheeks.

"Poor angry child!" he said tenderly.

He played with his brushes, always listening to the little noises overhead. At last the fascination of the little weeping face became too much for him, and he worked away at the drooping mouth as though there was nothing more important in the whole world.

The turning of the handle of the door made him look round with a start.

eyes fell. After a minute's pause she said with a courage born of necessity:

"I want—I mean I think I left my—my boots here this morning, and—"

She looked at her shoes, and then at the rain pattering on the window.

"They're over there," he said non-chalantly.

She followed the direction of his eyes, and gave a little start when she saw them. "Did I, really?" she said wonderingly to herself.

He watched her as she walked across the room and sat down beside them.

She picked them up delicately, with an air of disgust—they appeared very old and very, very wet—then dropped them heavily as though they burnt her fingers. She looked at him furtively. Did he know?

"I wonder you wait to put on boots when you are so anxious to be gone," he said indifferently. It was cruel of him, but then he meant to be cruel.

She flashed one look at him from glistening eyes, and then slowly, very slowly, she took off her shoes and lifted up one of the sodden boots. She tried to draw it on, but it stuck to her stocking. She looked at it miserably, then her tears overflowed and fell in little splashes on her hands.

It was too much for him. He went to help her. He loosened the laces lingeringly, as though he liked the job, and at last, after much coaxing, he got one boot on and began to fasten it up.

Certainly he did not know.

"Is—is it still raining?" she faltered.

"Yes, fast," he said cheerfully. He pushed the lace through the last hole and tied it securely. Her heart sank within her as he took up the other boot. It came on quite easily.

"It hurts," she said weakly.

"Then I'll run upstairs and get another pair."

"All the others hurt—worse," she said quickly.

"Oh, well, this will feel all right in a minute," he said unconcernedly.

Her tears fell faster than ever as she watched the cruel lace being dragged methodically through hole after hole.

"She's only a model," she said desperately. She simply couldn't go out in all that rain in these boots.

"And the best—as a model—I've ever had," he replied dryly.

"The play's gone on quitelong enough," he said savagely. He dragged it off with

a jerk and began to unlace the other. A gleam of satisfaction stole into her eyes and the tears forgot to fall. That boot joined the other in a far corner. He rubbed the little cold feet briskly and kissed them once—twice. He picked up the little bag and looked in it. It was empty!

He glanced at her. She was staring out of the window, but there was the ghost of a smile flickering round the corners of her lips. He untied the strings of the absurd little bonnet and then took off the pretence of a cape. As he laid them on a chair he looked at them grimly and then at the rain outside.

"You have warmer," he said with studied indifference.

That ghost of a smile broadened into a reality, and her eyes shone through her tears. She knew she was detected, but it didn't matter now. He was softened, she could feel that, and things were going to arrange themselves. In a minute or two he would say he was sorry. Perhaps after all she'd made a mistake. Certainly he did look innocent, and did he not love her?

She turned to him with the most engaging manner.

"What did you do it for? Tell."

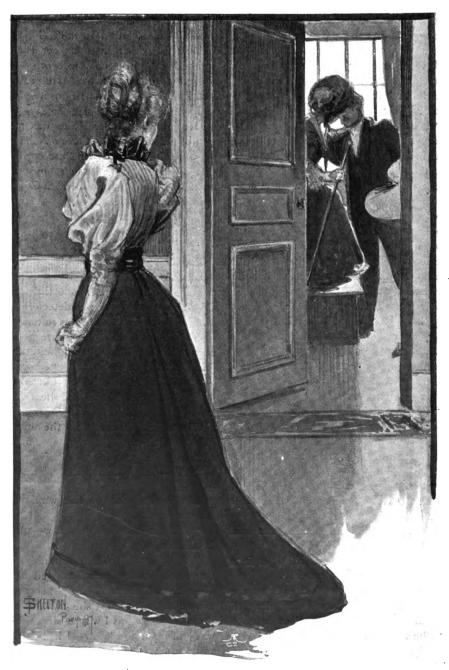
"But--but I didn't, Patty," he stammered.

She looked out of the window and hummed softly.

"Tell me just what you saw—please," he said eagerly.

"Well, I will," she said frankly. She turned to him again and noticed he was blushing furiously. The sight seemed to please her. "Well," she continued expansively, "just as I was passing, the door was half open you know—I heard a kiss, and I saw you start away from her looking—well—silly.

"Then—then I went upstairs, and the world seemed to have come to an end for me." Her voice faltered at the memory of it. "I waited for you to come and



"Just as I was passing I heard a kiss."

tell me about it, but you never cameand then-then it was dinner time and at dinner I thought you would say something, but you didn't. I wondered how you could eat so much - but then nothing ever does spoil your appetiteand every mouthful was choking me and you didn't even seem to notice it!" She paused for a moment, seemingly overcome by her self-pity. "And then-this afternoon as I sat for you-in the same place as that thing had (she is a thing, you know)—I thought you would tell me then-still you didn't-I gave you dozens of openings! And I had to tell you myself-and-you denied it."

She looked at him with large reproachful eyes, and as she looked, the colour burned deep into his face and neck.

He walked to the window and then came back to where she stood waiting.

"I didn't tell you," he said doggedly, "simply because it's such a—a stupid thing to tell—In fact—well—" The blush was now positively painful. "Well—she kissed me!"

"What?" Her eyes opened to their widest extent.

"You must believe me, Patty," he said a little wildly. "I never yet have lied to you—at least not—not to this extent," he added truthfully. "I went to fix her head right—you know it's slewed round in rather an unusual way."

She nodded—she understood—it was a favourite pause of his—"And—quite suddenly—she turned round and kissed my cheek." He drew a long breath. It was over—but it was pretty bad. He looked anxiously at her to see how she was taking it,

"Oh, thing! I thought you so simple!" she said softly to herself—then aloud—"The amazing creature!"

"Yes, wasn't she?" he agreed eagerly.

"And I paid her off there and then, and told her she need never come again."

"And you let me suffer all that," she said slowly. "You would even have let

me leave you——" His eyes passed, as though by accident, over the empty bag. She followed them—hesitated, and was

"You forget," he said, seizing immediately upon his advantage. "You condemned me unheard. You disbelieved my word, and you accused me of kissing — yes, actually kissing another woman. That made me angry, justly angry, and—well, I didn't see why I should explain," he concluded loftily.

She came quite close to him and fidgeted with his watch-chain.

"Wildebeest."

"Well?" He unconsciously imprisoned her hands in his.

"Was it-that kiss-nice?"

"It was horrid." There was no doubting the sincerity of the words.

"Yet, I've done it many dozens of times when I've been sitting there," she said meditatively.

"I think it was that very fact that made hers so abominable," he said vindictively. The memory of it still made him feel sore.

"Well, I forgive her," she said magnanimously, veering round in the most bewildering fashion. "You see, you really are rather nice, and fairly pleasing to the eye." She stepped back a little still holding his hands-and looked at him critically, "and, I think I knew just" how she felt. I feel positively sorry for her-for of course you were disgustingly rude to her, and didn't even give her a chance to explain her feelings-eh? I thought so. Do you know," she continued in the daring manner in which she said all quaint things, and which openly delighted him, "I don't a bit see why a girl shouldn't kiss a man-if he pleases her-just as much, and on as little provocation, as a man kisses a girl."

"But I didn't provoke her," he said mildly.

"Looking—well—as you look sometimes — is a provocation," she said severely.

- "Would you?" he asked quickly.
- "Yes," she said sturdily.
- "You're a plague and a little wicked story-teller as well."

"At present, you happen to be the only man who 'looks' — so — will you stoop down a little?"

After a while as she settled herself comfortably on his knee, he said, "And where would you have gone if I hadn't stopped you?"

"I don't know," she owned composedly.
"I never thought! You see I knew all along you wouldn't let me go."

"But you would have persisted?"

"Oh yes."

"Even if I had had to follow you right out into the rain?"

She nodded.

He looked at her with admiration. "But you made yourself very miserable," he said with some show of satisfaction. She looked very solemn.

- "I was simply saturated with misery,"
- "I never saw you cry such a lot before."
- "There wasn't a tear too many for the cause."

"You used my paint-rag to wipe them away while I was doing up your boots,"

She grinned, he had noticed it then; she was half afraid he had missed that.

- "You wouldn't lend me your handkerchief,"
 - " I felt such a brute all the time!"
- "And I knew you'd have to tell me in the end." Her eyes danced as she added, "You did blush! I thought it was going to be permanent!"

He laughed, and it was quite a happy laugh.

"Touching those boots," he began lazily, "weren't they very—"

"Those boots were the grimmest part of it all." She looked into his face to rivet his attention—"They were," she

paused to give full value to the coming announcement, "the Thing's!" Her voice was almost sepulchral.

For a moment he looked incredulous, then he gave a long low whistle.

"By Jove—so they were! She went off in the pair you gave her this morning and forgot to take her old ones. Why, why the dicken's didn't you say so?"

"Oh, you dear, blind old darling, can't you see? I pretended I left mine here just as an excuse to come in. I was frightfully done when I found those"—she glanced disdainfully at them in the corner—"and I daren't say they weren't mine or you would have found me out—and I didn't wan't you to so soon. But, it was bad though, having you put her boots—such boots too!—on me when all the while I was thinking you had been kissing her! It was having to suffer that that made me cry such a lot I think!"

"They looked at one another and laughed. Then she turned his face to the light and examined one cheek and then the other.

"Which side was it?" she asked calmly.

"I really don't know! I believe this."

She wriggled off his knee, drew from her pocket the very same paint-rag she had used for her tears, steeped it in turpentine from the well of his palette and flourished it before him,

"But, Patty—you said a few minutes ago that you didn't see why girls shouldn't——"

His voice ought to have melted her—but—"I never said that husbands should receive them though ——" She leaned over him—"The other cheek as well, sir—you seemed to be rather doubtful as to which it was—There! now the Plague's satisfied."

So was he, though the smart on both cheeks was pretty considerable.

THE SWAN-SONG OF BEETHOVEN.

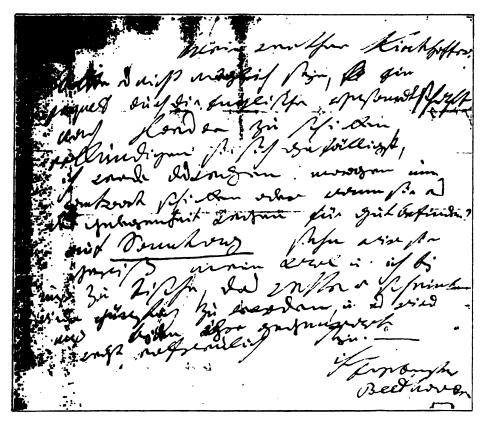
BY HAROLD G. DANIELS,

WITH AN AUTOGRAPH LETTER FROM BEETHOVEN TO KIRCHHOFFER.

"My dear Kirchhoffer" (wrote Beethoven),—"Please make enquiries as to whether it is possible to send the packet to London through the English Embassy. To-morrow I will send for an ar swer to this, or whenever you think most convenient. On Sunday, of course, Carl and I expect you to dinner with us. The weather appears to be favourable again, and your presence will be right pleasing to both of us.—Yours most respectfully, BEETHOVEN."

I T is a commonplace little note, which might as well have emanated from the pen of a dunce as from that of a musical genius. No doubt Mr. Kirchhoffer spent a bad quarter of an hour in puzzling out the message of his correspondent, whose

execrable handwriting might have been pleaded as an extenuating circumstance for the neglect of his wishes. Beethoven was an untidy writer; he cared little for the rules of punctuation, and was not particular as to his grammar, while his spelling might



Beethoven's autograph letter. (Translated above.)

or might not be accurate—depending, like the orthography of Mr. Weller's name, "upon the taste and fancy of the speller." Professor Lombroso, who cites him as an instance of degeneration, says that orthography was a constant source of trouble to him, that his writing was scarcely ever legible, and that his mathematical knowledge extended no farther than to simple multiplication. His slovenliness was a constant terror to all who had any domestic dealings with him, while on one occasion the strictures of a landlady, who gave forcible expression to strong views upon the subject, forced him to seek other lodgings.

Carl, mentioned in the note, is a wellknown figure in the pathetic story of the latter days of Beethoven's life, the part he played having been such as to hold up his memory to the general contumely of posterity. Whether Carl was as black as the biographers of Beethoven have painted him is a matter of conjecture; all the evidence we have upon which to convict him seeming to show that he was no more than a ne'er-do-weel, like hundreds of other youths before and since: The boy's bringing-up was certainly not conducive to the formation of a fine character, while he lacked the brains necessary to a real thorough-going blackguard. Tossed to and fro between his mother and Beethoven (his uncle), by the various decisions of the lower courts and the court of appeal, resultant upon a law suit of four years' respecting his guardianship; educated alternately by his mother who spoilt him and his uncle whose mingled reproaches and indulgence were his constant torment; and afterwards allowed free play to his headstrong yet vacillating will, it is not remarkable that he should have turned out badly. To live in the same house with Beethoven cannot have been very congenial to a youngster of Carl's age, for the composer was a testy and petulant old gentleman with a highlystrung temperament, as is seen in the

way he had of quarrelling with his best friends upon every trifling or imaginary Beethoven's own youth had been a drudgery; his love-story had terminated in bitterness, and no doubt the vicissitudes of his uneven professional career had tended to sour his temper, for the fickleness of Fame had received an ample illustration in his life. Yet he loved Carl. His latter days were one long sacrifice to provide for this misguided youth, and the one object of his life was to save the boy from himself. "People call me a misanthrope," he wrote in his will, "and believe that I am full of hatred and bitterness. the while my heart is overflowing with love." Towards this attitude Carl would have little sympathy, being without the requisite understanding; indeed, it would probably drive him farther into the paths of vice and excess. But while we may attempt to whitewash Carl by attributing his weakness rather to external influence than to innate badness, yet it is impossible to ignore the painful place he takes in the story of Beethoven's death and in the touching circumstances attending it.

The beginning of the end came with the first performance of the Ninth Symphony in D minor—the contents of the packet that Kirchhoffer was to send to London through the British Embassy. For many years the subject of this work had lain hidden in the deep recesses of the composer's brain, until the time should come when he would have leisure to transform into harmony and setting the vague and indefinite notes that he had jotted down or committed to memory. Suggestions of certain movements have been noticed in some of his earlier work, but it was reserved for this crowning achievement to see them take their sublime form. To make an attempt at description of this Meisterwerk is to tilt against windmills, for there is very little possibility of conveying in words a single idea of the music, whose only medium of interpretation is its performance.

writers have tried to record their impressions of the composer's meaning, some with indifferent success, some with good sense and judgment, conscious of the limits that confine the discussion of a transcendental theme. To a person possessing a sense of humour in addition to an appreciation of music other essays in the same direction will merely suggest the ludicrous. It is generally agreed among critical musicians that the Ninth Symphony belongs to the Third Style of Beethoven-the richest in spiritual emotion and most mystical in poetic feeling, free from unconscious plagiarism on the one hand, and the cramping influence of shibboleths on the other.

The work was composed in 1823, and in May of the following year was performed in Vienna. The occasion was hardly propitious, the public taste having forsaken Beethoven's music for the tuneful innovations of Rossini to such a degree that Beethoven entertained serious thoughts of transferring the scene of production to Berlin. However, he was ultimately prevailed upon to give the concert in Vienna. The house was crowded in every part; thunders of applause greeted the new music, and many eyes were dimmed with tears when the composer turned to acknowledge the plaudits. But here success ended. Nothing more substantial was forthcoming than a renewed lease of the fame he had long enjoyed. Financially the concert was a most dismal failure; the expenses had been heavy, and many people had entered free; while, contrary to custom, the Court patronage had been withheld, thus mulcting the performance of what was usually regarded as the composer's portion. Beethoven's one anxiety being to make provision for Carl, his mortification must have been bitter when he saw his most successful productions attended by financial disaster. He broke down altogether when his friends brought the

news that the net profits had not reached forty pounds.

"I have grown worse, because my uncle wanted me to be better." This remarkable utterance on the part of Carl strikes a telling note in the relationship between uncle and nephew. Carl grew, indeed, worse from day to day, and at last attempted suicide, for which he was ordered by the police to leave Vienna. With the welfare of this unfortunate youth still upon his mind, Beethoven conceived the idea of staying with his brother Johann-who at that time owned a country house in a village near Krems-in the hope of persuading the latter to leave Carl a competence. But the experiment proved a futile one from the point of comfortable living. There was no possibility of agreement between the imperious Ludwig and his sharp-tongued sister-in-law; Carl continued to cause trouble, and Johann, close-fisted and niggardly, insisted that his brother should contribute to the expenses of the family household. From beginning to end of the visit there was scarcely a moment of domestic peace, till, unwilling to live any longer in an atmosphere of continuous discord, Beethoven and his nephew took their departure. During the drive Beethoven caught a bad cold, and on arrival at Vienna became seriously ill.

It was the last sad scene in a sorrowful story. Neglected by Carl and out of touch with his old friends, Beethoven lay ill and unattended long enough for disease to get a firm grip upon him before help could be obtained. Even then, remembrance of his old rough ways caused the best doctors to refuse their attendance, and he was left to the doubtful care of incompetent physicians. Carl, meanwhile, sought to drown his sorrow (if he felt sorrow) in the gaieties and excitements of his old life and its questionable environment, keeping carefully away from his uncle's bedside. Indeed, few friends

came to afford the old man consolation in his last days. "Such is fame!" Beethoven might well have exclaimed. Vienna had forgotten him as he lay dying in the straits of grinding poverty; the world outside the Austrian capital hardly knew where he was, and cared even less. Only the Philharmonic Society of England came to his aid, and sent him a hundred pounds as the proceeds of a benefit concert.

So he died—the death of mortality. What was it to him that some twenty thousand people of Vienna followed his coffin to the edge of the grave? How much greater would their service have been had they followed instead his con-

certs during his lifetime! "Beethoven ist todt," they said to one another, but then they scarcely realised the nature of their loss. Of the dense crowd that came to honour him at his funeral, perhaps none knew of the projected Tenth Symphony and the grand Requiem, whose unwritten music had life only in the mind of its would-be creator. As he had lived, so he died-in penury, want, and suffering, tasting bitterly of the fruits that fall to the lot of the genius whose doubtful fortune it is to be born ahead of his age. It was reserved for a later generation to realise what a fit accompaniment to the exit of a great soul was the Ninth Symphony-the Swan-Song of Beethoven.





BY MARY L. PENDERED.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. MCNEILL BARBOUR.

LTHOUGH a sensitive man, Paul Bernardine showed upon his face no distinct sign of relief when he heard himself acquitted of the charge of murder. He may have cultivated, for effect, a stony calm, or have failed to take in the full significance of the verdict; but it is more probable that, somewhere behind his conscious desire, in the tangle of impulse, motive, habit, responsibility, and reason the complex modern man is so rarely able to unravel, an unnamed humour kept the mercury of his spirit Perhaps he vaguely felt a from rising. grim sense of justice suggesting that he ought to be hanged; a misty fear lest the fact of his remaining unhanged should prove a dismal error, to his cost. course, he knew, however obstinately he tried to evict daylight from his consciousness, that the death of his young wife was scored to his account, and he could not be sure the deed had closed the matter.

He was aware that the intoxicating fumes of success and satisfied desire would effectively blot out any stalking ghosts of remorse for a time; but a superstitious dread of the future had begun its stealthy crawl, and the voice of consoling sophistry waxed faint. It had been such a strong bray; its syllogism defied attack.

Premise a woman unfit to marry, of the thinnest lukewarm blood, delicate of health, living in mere toleration of existence; add an universal proposition that sufferers had better not be alive: the conclusion stands out clearly in favour of

a painless death.

So, at least, it seemed to Paul Bernardine, until he acted upon it, and found it powerless to overcome the sense of nausea and self-loathing that followed. When he looked on the dead face of the frail pretty creature he had sworn to love and cherish, he wondered if he were really the monster some principle within accused him of being. Was it possible? His nature had shown itself kindly, full of good intentions, honourable in general action, quick in sympathy. then have masked a cold-blooded, murderous intent under an affectionate even tender, manner, in order that his design should be worked out safely and artistically?

He would have persuaded himself, with all the plausibility of a hair-sprung, sinuous mind, that it was a real tenderness aided him, that the morphia urgently requested by the neuralgia patient, in opposition to medical orders, had been granted in kindness, for the peace of the sufferer apart from any other motive lying behind like a snake in coil. It would have been cruel to withhold the pacification. She was in agony of body, while he was in agony of mind, strained by the sight of her pain as well as by the hidden gnawing of his own. What sin could it be that gave her rest, and him hope? Unseen influences had surely been on the side of her release and his liberty. Yet he had turned away with a sob in his throat, and something akin to despair at his heart, strangling triumph.

In the ensuing trial he stood upright in a garb of challenging innocence, bravely worn; no vestige of guilt, bereavement only, visible. He would reap his harvest; the stress he had gone through, the risk he was daring, demanded, nay, deserved it. At one juncture he had cause for anxiety; evidence appeared to be going against him; but absence of motive told to his advantage in the search for intent. A devoted husband, demonstratively fond and attentive, whose fidelity did not blench under the glare of detective lanterns-it was monstrous to suppose he tried to rid himself of the lovely girl he had wedded solely for love. No word of complaint had ever been heard to pass his lips; and she had declared herself blessed with the dearest of men. The case against the prisoner was decidedly unproven, and the Judge, in summing up, spoke severely to those who had unjustly accused a fellow-creature of the worst of all crimes.

And so Paul Bernardine went out of court a clean man, free to go his way and rejoice in the world's good opinion.

THE MOTIVE.

'It was late in the evening. The lambent rubies and emeralds of the riverboats had almost ceased to glide by the pale lamp-moons on sentry-guard over the Embankment and dark waters of the Thames. In a high flat not far from the spot where the glories of Cremorne once flowered, a woman was pacing up and down a small room monotonously.

The window was open to the cool damp air from the river, and yet this woman was hot as of a fever; her skin was flushed, her lips required constant moistening. She wore black, and it was not unbecoming to her, made in a fashion somewhat unconventional. It left her throat bare amid falling laces, and her arms, from the elbow, also uncovered. Her age might have been anything between thirty and forty, while her beauty was of little account, lying in a nameless charm few men could analyse, and fewer women. Fair skin, dark hair and eyebrows, a flexible mouth, fine teeth, a strong chin, a supple figure and proud carriage, small hands and feet, curiously changeable eyes, light or dark with a passing mood-these are items ordinary enough in a country of good-looking, healthy women, and the catalogue says little or nothing. For it is some latent aroma of magical personality, exhaled in smile or manner, that decides masculine judgment on feminine claims, and no analytical inventory of colour or feature ever influences such decision.

Powerful emotion was swaying Marian Sylvestre now, and her actions were all large, would have been theatrical but for the fact that no audience was present. Her hands were clenched in a fighting attitude, her eyes blazed with a strange surface light; they were wide open and strained. Every few minutes she appeared to be listening, and stopped short in her walk. Then she went on again, stride by stride the length of the limited room.

Some excerpts from her thoughts will show how the tempest surged.

"Whenever," she was thinking, "I resolve on one way, the whole force of my mind rises to crush the resolution. When I determine on the opposite course, my heart and nature rise in revolt. Shall I feel any more definite when he is here, and we are face to face? I doubt it. How I fear him! . . . How I long for him . . . his kisses! . . . The

struggle must end soon . . . it wears me out-exhausts all my energies, cripples me. I seem to have no strength left, either to think or act! I must die if this lasts. . . Morbid? No. I have never been morbid. . . . I am too healthy, clear of mind, happy of temperament . . . how could I be morbid? A day in the woods makes a child of me . . . there are times when I could dance to a barrel-organ, with the street children! And yet . . . I believe I am going mad! . . . He is bound to be acquitted; everything points to that, and he thinks he is going to marry me. . . I have let him think so . . . fool . . . wretch! Oh, but if I could! To be an honoured wife before the world . . . never to be alone any more . . . to be taken care of, cherished . . . sweet old word! to be cherished . . . is it not worth anything?"

". . . Ah, no!" she shiyered, "not to know one's self for ever a light woman, to be false to one's ideal, to take a second lover, as poor, weak, ruined girls do . . no! When I gave myself, it was for once and all; my excuse was the passion of a life, the deathlessness of that passion, the impossibility of change . . . a marriage made by Heaven, without asking sanction of man. Ah! how sure I was—how very sure! And it was all true. I did not mistake. . . . But . . . who could bear the loneliness? who could? . . . the growing old, the depression that steals on with vanishing youth and failing health? Would it not be better to . . . no . . I am not a coward, and many want me here . . . thank God!"

Every now and then she threw herself in one of the low chairs, lying back amongst the dainty cushions of her own handiwork with closed eyes, panting. Then, as her colour sank, she looked old, her features plain, her vivacious mutable beauty gone. Again she would rise and fling out her arms, like a swimmer alone in perilous breakers, trying, once more, to make a way through the conflicting elements that enveloped and threatened to overcome her.

Until there came a rap at the door; the authoritative rap of a conqueror, sound she feared. The moment had arrived; and the man!

She was alone in the flat. Her servant came only for part of the day; there was no sleeping-room for a domestic, and Marian preferred spending her hardly earned money otherwise than in taking a larger home. She opened the door and admitted her visitor. He was breathless with his climb up five flights of stairs.

Her breath came shortly, too.

He did not speak, but stretched out his arms to her. She evaded them, and led the way into her sitting-room, where she entrenched herself behind a big wicker chair near the window.

"You expected me?" he said.

"Yes." Her eyes were very dark now, and unexpressive.

"It is all over. I am acquitted. You have heard?"

They stood opposite each other, breathing hard. The rich tint of youth had come into her face again. She looked beautiful and desirable in the eyes of the man who was there to claim her. But her next words startled him.

"Paul," she said, suddenly, leaning forward and speaking in low vibrating tones. "Paul, did you do it?"

There was no need to answer. A wave of icy horror seemed to pass over the little room, and there was a poignant silence—the silence that waits upon things unutterable.

"It is a relief," he broke the long pause unsteadily, "to be able to speak the truth—God! what a relief it is! I am a free man, guiltless before the world, chained to a criminal whose secret I must keep! Could anything be more . . . more . . . I think if I did not love



He did not speak.

you, I should yet want you always near me, as the one creature on earth to whom I need not lie."

There was the slightest of all foreign accents in the rhythm of his sentences, a proof of an un-English origin, if any were needed after a glance at his southern eyes and skin. There was something, too, in the nervous agitation of his manner not in accord with a British ideal of repose. He was making an effort to conquer this, but one hand, resting on the back of a chair, shook visibly.

Marian had paled again during his speech. She trembled now as she cried:

"Ah, I feared—I feared. All the time when you never came, never wrote, I dreaded. But I tried to hope the dread was groundless."

"I could not call or write; it would not have been safe," he said. "They have had bloodhounds on my track; but I trusted you would wait, and now . . . now. You do not know what I have gone through, but it was only hastening the end, and she was happy at the last -quite happy. She died in my arms, believing I loved her"; -his voice shook a little-"and I did love her, as one loves a faithful dog or a favourite poem. She was outside my life, not of me-she never could be. From the first time I saw you in my house, I knew what I had done. And so did you know. There was no self-deception after our eyes had once met. But why do I say all this again, Marian, Marian!"

He came forward to her with outstretched arms, but she held him at bay with an imperious gesture.

"No, no!" she panted. "You must not touch me . . . that would be shameful, damnable, the consummation of a crime; I . . . Oh! to think—to think I am so vile, I, who never wished harm to any creature upon God's earth . . . who have tried so hard to be good, and fought—fought. If my mother had but strangled me at my birth!"

He took her hand gently and kissed it.

"Do not say such things, Marian, dearest. There is the sweetest of life yet in store for us. Let me look into your eyes. I know what I shall find there, and it will recompense me for all I have suffered, for the slow torture of seeing her die, for the danger I have risked, for the loss of my soul! Come, darling."

She did not look at him, but she drifted weakly into his arms, and let them close round her in an embrace that, for the moment, choked out remembrance, conscience, shame. Only for the moment. She struggled from him again with a shuddering sigh. Her flesh had turned cold, her heart seemed to be beating in her head. She staggered across the room and leant against the framework of the open window. As if in mockery of her anguish, a voice arose from beneath, one of those fine ill-disciplined voices often heard in London squares, and the words of a modern love-song floated up on the humid air, sickly sweet as a sentimental ache, yet cruel now as a poisoned arrow to the woman who had to listen to them.

- "I want no stars in Heaven to guide me, I need no sun, no moon to shine, While I have you, sweetheart, beside me, While I know that you are mine.
- "Kings may play a weary part, love, Thrones may ring with wild alarms, But the kingdom of my heart, love, Lies within thy loving arms."

The man came there, to the river-side public-house, nearly every night, and his songs were stale to Marian. But to-night he was singing for her, at her. Angry, painful tears surged to her eyes, and a passion of rebellion swept over her. Why had she been chosen as the butt of Fate—to bear the torments of Tantalus? It was the old cry. Why should she have met too late the one soul that could command hers? And would not this have been sorrow enough without the harassing demands of a nature at variance

with her highest reason? The dear sweetheart she had sinned for, and still yearned to have beside her, would never be there again; she must not, could not, lie in the loving arms that were ready for her, though her heart and feminality hungered for them. With a fierce snap she shut down the window and stood before it, looking over the room in a mist. Paul Bernardine, eager, triumphant, faced her expectantly.

"To think," she said in a curious dry voice he hardly recognised, "that all our wickedness is wasted, that nothing can come of it. How fiends must laugh!"

"What do you mean?" he asked sharply.

"Wasted," she reiterated mechanically, because with all the will in the world I cannot pay the price, reward you for . . . what you have done. I shall love another man till I die."

Her desperate eyes did not flinch from the fury that sprang into his face.

"You tell me this—you!" he detonated. "How dare you, how dare you?"

She continued in monotonous tones, shifting her strained gaze a little.

"You may remember I told you once something about him . . . and my past. You said it did not matter. be my lover, though he I let him We lived could not marry me. together, at intervals. I make no excuse... it was as if we had no will. no choice, and it never seemed wrong until there was a danger of discovery, which meant breaking a wife's heart, besides his ruin, and liselong injury to his children. It meant also the negation of all we had ever done to add to the world's sum of good . . . for thus society has decreed. I never hesitated for one instant. I would no more willingly have made that unknown woman suffer than I would have hurt your little Amy." Her voice sank and trembled. "We agreed never to see each other again, save as friends, occasionally. Gradually our meetings have become rarer

and rarer, until now . . . now," she wavered, and wrestled with the throb in her throat—"I have lost him altogether—and it kills me to think of it. Paul, Paul, don't you see it is all a mistake? I can never marry you. Even if there were no black cloud of sin between us, I could not be your wife while I still love him and long for him, day and night." . .

Bernardine stood as if petrified by her confession, round which his heart and brains and blood seemed to be whirling dizzily. The voice from outside penetrated the stillness, in muffled tones demanding:

"What can I do for thee, weary thee, grieve thee, Lean on thy bosom fresh burthen to add?"

He blazed out:

"Why do I not kill you?"

"I don't know," she said feebly. "I wish you would."

"And why—why," he went on savagely, "have you led me to suppose . . . did you not say that if I were free you might listen to me, not until then? Was it only to put me off . . . to play with me, because you thought I was a fool, a man of cardboard? Tell me!"

"I did not think," she faltered; "men say so much they do not mean . . . I could not believe . . . you really."

"When I said," he interrupted, "that I would be free, that I would claim you, that nothing should keep me apart from you—heaven, or hell, or all the furies—did you take it for mere raving? Could you not read me well enough to know me better than that? If you never loved me, why have you let me hold you in my arms, and kiss your lips? Can you answer?"

"Need I?" she flamed up suddenly "Do you not know why? My loneliness my empty arms, my unquenchable craving for a tender word, a caress, now and then—say once a month, or a year—can't you understand? Why—why! Because I! am a woman, a natural woman—that is why!"

She lost control and ended in a sob.

"You are a wanton woman," he volleyed furiously, "and you cloak your true feelings under pretty words."

She drew herself up, her eyes flashing, and a fiery retort rose to her lips. But she choked it.

"If that were true, should I ask you to leave me now? Paul, for your own sake, as well as for mine, do not stay here to tempt me. Would you ever be satisfied with the tepid affection I could give you, an echo of your own passion, a shadow from my own possibility of passion? Could this content you? No."

"Yes—I say yes," he answered quickly.

"And I will take it. Can a starving man choose? I have thrown away everything for your sake; do you think I can live without you? I will make you all mine; you shall forget everything, everybody, but me, Marian, darling, love of my life!"

Then something in her manner as she yielded to his compelling arms, caused him a quick recoil.

back and clenching his hands. "Never—never could I bear it . . . to have you look like that when I touch you, to meet no response, nothing but tame surrender, submission . . . it would be worse—worse . . . Hell! I am going mad! I will kill you and throw your body in that river. I will be hanged and add another victim to your list.

He took her throat in both hands and held her from him as a strong man holds a furious beast at bay

Then he laughed. She seemed half dead already, and did not struggle, or even move.

"Too easy—too easy!" he ground between his teeth, "no—you shall live to want me, and die of thirst . . . damned souls both . . . damned for ever!"

He flung her away, and had gone before the last consonant struck. She struggled to her feet, flew to the door after him, and down the seventy-five steps to the street. But he had disappeared in the ocean of darkness.

And the tenor man outside the beerhouse was still sentimentally voicing the sweet woe of lovers to the gloomy river.

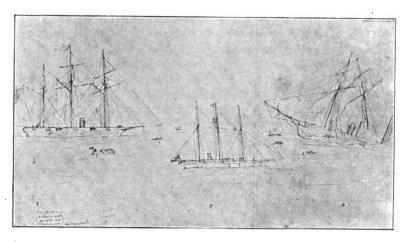
Not many days afterward the man loved by Marian Sylvestre sat reading the evening paper in his library. He looked prosperous and content. Glancing over the columns, his eye was caught by a paragraph headed "The Bernardine Case," and he read:

"It is said that the terrible anxiety of the late trial has had a severe mental effect on Mr. Bernardine, who is a prey to the hallucination, not uncommon, we believe, to released prisoners, that he really committed the crime of which he has been acquitted, and persists in demanding to be taken into custody again. We can only hope that the ill-fortuned gentleman will speedily recover, under sound medical treatment, his normal health of mind."

The reader laid down his paper and mused.

"I wonder who he is?" he speculated. Paul Bernardine's death in the hunting field was recorded a few weeks later. He was much regretted and bewreathed by a remorseful public.

The woman lived on, haunted; to fret and strive against herself; perhaps to tempt more men.



The Sinking of the "Alabama" by the "Kearsarge."

(From the original Skitch, never before reproduced, made from the deck of the yacht "Deerhound," by Mr. Lancaster, and presented to the "Idler" by Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny, Bart.)

WATCHING A NAVAL DEATH-DUEL.

ANY who belong to the generation now in process of passing away can without difficulty recollect the great naval duel off Cherbourg which closed the career of the famous Confederate privateer Alabama. The late Mr. Lancaster's English yacht the Deerhound was instrumental, at the close of the fight, in rescuing most of the Confederate sailors from a watery grave, from which timely act of humanity resulted much correspondence in the British and American Press, mainly based upon the iniquity of Mr. Lancaster in daring to preserve the lives of privateers or "pirates"! On board of the Deerhound at the time were several members of her owner's family, including his son, then a boy of ten; and it is by the courtesy of Mr. Lancaster fils and of Sir C. C. de Crespigny that the interesting pen-andink drawing which accompanies this article is reproduced.

It was on a Sunday that this battle

to the death took place—the date, to be exact, was June 19th, 1864. The dreaded Alabama had fairly terrorised the high seas for a period of twenty-two months; and perhaps it smacked somewhat of poetic justice that she should arrive at her final cruise—to the bottom of the seas—just as the Government she served was similarly sinking to its doom.

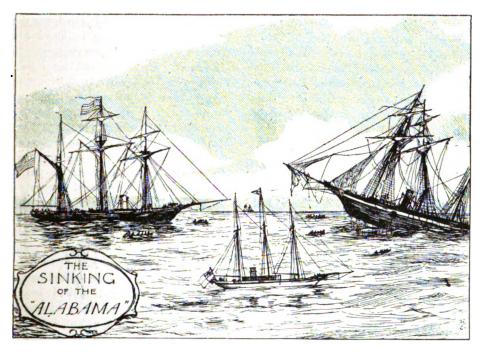
Venturing into Cherbourg to coal, and being closely followed by the United States war steamer Kearsarge, the captain of the Alabama adopted the unusual course (in other than mediæval warfare at least) of challenging his adversary to mortal combat. No doubt it was in some respects a foolish course to pursue, and it is one for which Admiral Semmes has been adversely criticised. Still, on paper, the two vessels were equally matched; and certainly the Confederate can by no possibility have foreseen or suspected that the sides of the Kearsarge were protected by a network of chain cables—a piece of

deception by her captain that can only be defended by an application of the old adage that all is fair in war as in love. Moreover, the privateer had already sunk, in fair fight, one United States warship—the *Hatteras* to wit.

Mr. Lancaster is eloquent about the perfectly true incident of a heavy shell from the *Alabama* embedding itself in one of the enemy's bulkheads and failing

was, naturally, impressed vividly the scene of the Alabama's men struggling in the water, his father steaming to their aid, and the renowned privateer herself sinking slowly to her last bed while the Channel surges chanted her pæan. Grim destroyer of so many stout craft, she sank at last to her own destruction—

"Nor doth remain
The shadow of men's ravage . . ."



Re-drawn from the original sketch.

to explode. If it had done so, the Federal cruiser must undoubtedly have gone to the bottom at once. This missile is now, I believe, preserved in the museum of the Navy Department at Washington.

As may be imagined, those on board the yacht crowded her deck--just as the spectators on shore (including many English, for news of Semmes' challenge had reached far and nigh) crowded the cliffs—to witness this unwonted spectacle. On Mr. Lancaster's boyish mind

The fight did not last long, chiefly because, while the leaden hail from the privateer beat upon her adversary's iron sides and harmed them not, every shot from the Kearsarge that was well-aimed told upon the Alabama's unarmoured hull. Captain Winslow, of the Kearsarge, has contended, in answer to the criticism that he should have made some effort to save his drowning enemies by means of his own boats, that he was faced by the risk that his Government might refuse to recognise the privatee: smen as belligerents, and

might mete out to them, if captured, the privileges usually accorded to pirates. If so, it would appear that the Federal commander was not altogether blamable in leaving his discomfited foes to the *Deerhound's* boats; albeit some forty of them found a watery grave ere they could be picked up.

The "corsair" was defeated, but by no means disgraced. Her tomb in the caves of the ocean was surely the fittest that could have been devised for her, after such a life! In less than two years of active existence she had destroyed property equalling in value nearly five and a half millions of dollars, taken more than two thousand prisoners, fought two severe battles, and sunk a United States ship-of-war after an engagement lasting but sixteen minutes!

The Alabama-Kearsarge duel was practically without incident. Semmes probably knew well, so soon as he discovered his enemy's little deception in the matter of chain-armour, that his noble vessel's days were numbered. On the Deerhound landing him at Southampton he speedily made many good friends and true in this country, and was publicly presented with a magnificent jewelled sword. But these courtesies to the gallant Semmes were probably taken full account of by the United States Government when formulating their subsequent demand upon Great Britain on account of the depredations of the Alabama, or "Number 290."

And the Kearsarge? She survived the action many long years, continuing in commission by the United States Navy for a considerable period. Finally she foundered at sea, her end taking place but a few years since.

Of the Alabama's boarding-master an Englishman—while engaged in this capacity on board a vessel called the Louisa Hatch, the following amusing incident is related by Admiral Semmes: "The boats (American) pulled in quite

unsuspiciously, and observing that the Hatch was an American-built ship, went alongside of her. The prize-master, who was taking it easily in his shirt-sleeves, and so had no uniform on which could betray him, went to the gangway and threw The two masters declined them a rope. to come on board, as they were in a hurry, they said, but remained some time in conversation, the prize-master, who was an Englishman, endeavouring to play Yankee the best he could. He repeatedly invited them to come on board, but they declined. They wanted to know what steamer 'that was,' pointing to the Alabama. They were told that it was a Brazilian packet steamer, come over to the colony to bring some convicts. 'What are you doing here?' (at Teneriffe), they now enquired. 'We sprang a pretty bad leak in a late gale, and have come in to see if we can repair damages.' Presently there was a simultaneous start on the part of both the boats' crews, and the words 'Stern all!' being bawled rather than spoken, both boats backed out in 'double quick' and put off, with the most vigorous strokes of their oars, for the shore, like men who were pulling for their lives. The prize-master, a little astonished at this sudden movement, looked around him to see what could have caused it. The cause was soon apparent. A small Confederate flag—a boat's ensign—had been thrown by the coxswain of one of the boats on the spanker boom to dry, and while the conversation was going on, a puff of wind had blown out the folds, and displayed the little tell-tale to the gaze of the astonished whalers."

One long-disputed point—viz., who hailed Mr. Lancaster's yacht, the *Deerhound*, and whether she was hailed from the victorious *Kearsarge* or from the sinking *Alabama*—I am able to settle once for all. Mr. Lancaster, in a letter to the London *Daily News*, said: "They (his accusers) admit that when the *Alabama* went down, the yacht, being near the

Kearsarge, was hailed by Captain Winslow and requested to aid in picking up the men who were in the water." This is, however, entirely erroneous. The yacht was hailed from the nearly-submerged deck of the Alabama by Boarding Officer G. T. Fullam, and it was in response to his hail that the Deerhound proceeded upon her humanitarian task of life-saving.

Mr. Fullam entered the Royal Navy, and subsequently exchanged that for the English merchant marine. It only remains to add that he died, as he had lived, upon the ocean, being drowned at sea. In Admiral Semmes' Memoirs we find it stated: "The speed of the Alabama was always greatly overrated by the enemy. She was ordinarily about a tenknot, ship. She was said to have made eleven knots and a half on her trial trip, but we never afterwards got it out of her. Under steam and sail both, we logged on one occasion thirteen knots and a quarter, which was her utmost speed." But the Boarding Officer's comment upon this is "Captain Semmes subsequently records instances of her doing fifteen knots."



A LADY'S MAGAZINE OF THE BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY.

BY MARY GEOGHEGAN.



HE LADY'S MAGA-ZINE; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex. July to December, 1813."

They lived in stirring times, those members of the Fair

Sex for whom this magazine was compiled-in the epoch-making interval between Trafalgar and Waterloo. A few months before they had thrilled at the horrors of the Retreat from Moscow therein depicted. Now they glowed over the story-told by Wellington's despatches in the past month's summary that concluded each number-of the siege of San Sebastian and the battle of Vittoria. Gradually the allied armies were enclosing in a ring of fire one still mighty figure. One by one, "the Kings"—to use Mrs. Browning's expressive phrase-"crept out again to feel the sun." It was the day of the awakening of Germany. Slowly, but surely, the menacing shadow of Napoleon was passing from the map of Europe. The chronicle—which opens invariably with a bulletin of the poor old King's health, bodily and mental—is full of war and rumours of war.

Frequent mention is made of French prisoners, then so numerous in England. This must have been read with interest at the time:—

"The prisoners of war in this country have been peremptorily forbidden to manufacture lace, but allowed fourteen days to dispose of their implements."

Here is an account of a disturbance which arose among the French prisoners

confined on board the Sampson prison ship, in the Medway, on learning of Napoleon's reverses; one side contending for the Bourbons, the other for Bonaparte:—

"From argument, they proceeded to threats and blows—till at last the two parties arranged themselves in order of battle, and commenced a desperate conflict, which terminated in a defeat of Bonaparte's adherents. Nearly 600 men and officers, who took part in the affray, have been put in close confinement."

For aiding other French prisoners of war in an unsuccessful attempt to escape, two persons in Edinburgh were sentenced to seven years' transportation. And an Englishman, Wiltshire by name, was hanged for having served on board a French ship, though he pleaded that he had escaped to the privateer after over three years' confinement in a French prison. Here is a grim item concerning the men who in two years' time were to win Waterloo:—

"In Col. Orde's regiment (the 99th) of only four hundred men, one hundred and thirty-two thousand lashes had been inflicted in three years and a half."

It would be hard to get a paragraph more packed with human misery than the following, taken from the dry report of the City of London's grand jury on the Debtors' Prison at Newgate:—

"The part for women, calculated for not more than 60, contains 120, each of whom is confined in a space of *fifteen inches*, or even less, as many of the number are obliged to keep their children with them for want of a home."

The barbarous penal laws were still unrepealed in Ireland. Hanging for robbery was general. Bread was nearly at famine price. The price of the quartern wheaten loaf in July was as high as eighteen-pence halfpenny. There were many cases of bakers adulterating their bread with alum, with potatoes, and plaster of paris, to the extent of one-fifth. Nay, one daring rascal, who—in the early days of the French Revolution would have paid the penalty à la lanterne for his ingenuity—was convicted of having in his possession—

"A quantity of calcined stone, prepared by a man in Thames Street, for the express purpose of adulterating bread. The baker was fined ten pounds, the highest penalty which the law authorises."

One would have liked to have shifted the sentence of those ill-fated aiders and abettors of the French prisoners' unsuccessful attempt to escape to his shoulders, and vice versa. After that, it is not surprising to find from a paragraph headed "Dearness of Bread," that the Lord Mayor, observing the bakers" returns of the prices paid for flour to be at variance with Mark Lane, to the amount in many instances of ten shillings per sack, so that the 'public could never enjoy, as they should, the advantages of a falling market, announced his determination to institute a strict weekly investigation, and issued several hundred summonses.

Times were bad for the poor. Glory abroad, want at home. War, as usual, pressed heaviest on the weakest. Wages were low, provisions dear, taxes excessive.

Consequently there is this significant little item:—

"RUNAWAY HUSBANDS. — The township of Manchester has advertised rewards for the apprehension of no fewer than forty husbands, who have, within a short period, deserted their wives and children, and left them on the parish."

There was war in America as well as Europe. Canada was invaded.

" A Gentleman in America."

There is an exhilarating largeness in the title, suggestive of the prairie, of this pioneer of torpedo warfare, who by means of a diving-boat he invented, dived under the bottom of the British ship Ramillies, off New London:—

"In the third attempt, he came up directly under the Ramillies, and fastened himself and his boat to her keel, where he remained half an hour, and succeeded in boring a hole through her copper; but while engaged in screwing a torpedo to her bottom, the screw broke, and defeated his object for that time. So great, however, is the alarm on board the Ramillies, and the apprehension of being blown up by one of these machines, that Commodore Hardy, it is said, has withdrawn his force from before New London, and keeps his ship constantly under way, instead of lying at anchor, as formerly.

The following is a description of a "new steam barge" going at the rate of five miles an hour between Norwich and Yarmouth:—

"It is moved by a number or oars somewhat in the shape of a barn shovel, fixed on each side of the vessel, round an axis which is turned by a small steam-engine."

The parishes of St. Margaret's and St. John's, Westminster, were lighted with gas, one lamp being used where there were three of the common sort.

A grand National Fete was given at Vauxhall, by order of the Regent—the very Vauxhall to which Joe Sedley escorted Amelia and Becky Sharpe—in commemoration of the victory of Vittoria. It was a perfect success.

"Gardens illuminated with taste and splendour unparalleled. Several beautiful exhibitions of fireworks; company respectable and brilliant in the extreme; past two in the morning before all the guests alighted. Dancing began about four; much confusion; many accidents; many ticket holders, after a detention of three or four hours in the crowd, obliged to return disappointed and on foot,"

As a natural corollary to the public rejoicings, "safe, cheap and convenient" small tin or brass lamps, fed with spermaceti oil, suitable for illuminations, are advertised; which our magazine prophesies "will serve a family from generation to generation." Did any appear at the Diamond Jubilee?

"We highly approve the plan, and recommend it to those sober families who are content with modestly testifying their participation in any public joy, without seeking to outblaze their neighbours by the ostentatious glare or more costly glass-lights."

Wolves infested Spain, owing to the number of unburied bodies.

An office was opened at Berlin where-

"In exchange for rings and ear-rings of gold, brought as patriotic offerings, the donors receive rings of iron, bearing the motto—'I have given gold for iron, 1813.'"

Twenty-five thousand wounded Frenchmen were brought into Leipsic, filling churches and public buildings. Joseph Bonaparte's sword, left behind, after Vittoria, was presented to the Regent.

An American privateer, coasting the Western Isles of Scotland, captured a vessel within a mile of its owner's house. Also this piece of intelligence:—

"FAIR EQUESTRIANS.—At the royal buck hunt on Friday last, two young ladies of the name of Stevens kept up with the hounds during the whole of the chase, which lasted four hours."

But all this is only scanning a file of the newspapers of the day, read alike by both sexes. It is time to turn elsewhere for proof that the Lady's Magazine was indeed what its sub-title asserted it to be, an Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex. And the first remark that occurs to the casual reader of to-day on turning over its yellow pages is, "So the New Woman had arrived on the scene even then "the New Woman and her Old Critic, both of them as ancient as the pyramid of Cheops. A series of letters, signed "An Old Gentlewoman,"-one long wail over the free and easy manners of those degenerate times-might have been written to-day.

Hear what she says, that venerable dame, about that dreadful, up-to-date young person of Anno Domini 1813:—

"The alterations, that surprised me so much before, have rather increased than lost their power of astonishing me; and the more I reflect, the more I am struck with the want of that reserve and decorum, which used formerly to prevail in all promiscuous meetings. As to dressno distinction exists between the mistress and the maid, except that the one wears a cap; and the difference between master and man is only marked by the latter wearing powder. 'Tis no less strange than true that gentlemen—or, at least, peers and baronets—will dine with ladies in great coats, trowsers, and coloured handkerchiefs about their necks.

"Another wonderful change in the manners of modern days is the multiplication of noise, Nobody now cares how far he disturbs another. The elevation of one voice is the signal for half a dozen more being raised to their highest pitch; and, no matter whether people speak well or ill, they will be heard.

"Instead of the slow quiet walk, which formerly denoted persons of dignity and consequence, young ladies now run up and down a room, as if they were answering a bell; and, by this agility, secure the easiest chairs, and the best places, before their seniors have got half way to them.

"Tis thus that, by degrees, the whole structure of morals and of manners will be overturned Already has the ease of the women created insolence in the men; and I am convinced they think they honour every female to whom they listen or speak.

"It does not appear remarkable to anyone but myself, to hear the young men speak of their dogs and horses, as the only objects for which they feel any interest; and, when not on subjects of such importance, a sort of quizzing raillery marks their tone that would formerly have been offensive in the company of ladies, but which, by the accommodating fair ones of the present day, seems not merely allowed, but preferred."

How they were preached at, those foremothers of ours! The model woman of the period seems to be too Miltonic a conception to suit modern ideas. Let the fin-de-siècle champion of her sex's rights peruse with what composure she may the following extracts from a letter by "Benedict":—

"The allurements or attractions that gain a husband soon become familiar; but the qualifications that create happiness in domestic association, rise in his appreciation, as he grows more sensible of their importance to his interest and his comforts; while, on the other hand, repaying the felicity he derives with unlimited confidence and affection, the trifling pleasures of an unmarried female are forgotten amidst the approbation she receives, and the conscious satisfaction that results, from fulfilling the duties of a newer and more enlarged sphere of action."

"The trifling pleasures of an unmarried female!" Verily the great pendulum of the century has swung forward. The whirligig of time has brought its revenges of the bicycle and ladies' club.

However, in justice, this sugar-plum, forming part of an impassioned apostrophe to gentle fair ones as the inspirers of the study of economy—domestic, not political!—must be given:—

"Teach us then to follow the road of economy; your sparkling eyes will give the only sun-beams needed, to light us on our cheerful way; your voice will be the only guide we shall want; your smile of approbation the only reward we shall look for."

The four serial tales were pitched in the same key. Listen to this criticism from a young lady, too, who—after the fashion of the youngest Miss Pecksniff styles herself "your gay, your giddy, your unthinking Charlotte."

"But here, where the obsolete virtues of humanity, humility, delicacy, and diffidence, are thought the first requisites to form a female character, what charms can there be in the conversation of a society of this description to Clara Hastings, who has been brought up in more modern notions?"

It is interesting to note that diffidence and humility were cardinal virtues in the female character of 1813. We have travelled a long way since.

Here is a bit of typical slang from the same lively source. It is true it seems more suited to the kitchen of the period than the drawing-room:—

"The arrival of two smarts convinced me that my heart could still flutter at the sight of a beau."

Here is an extract from a fashionable

"His lordship," replied the marquis carelessly, will do himself the honour of kissing your ladyship's hand in a few days."

"Kissing my hand," exclaimed the marchioness indignantly. "I admire his Caledonian assurance. You forget the immensity of space be-

tween us. Though your lordship may be disposed to obliterate the remembrance of the vassalage of his ancestors, Lady Almeria Bulstrode can never forget that his grandfather bowed submission even to our castle walls; and the cringing habit has descended, with his purchased honors, to his favorite successor, whose neck bends by native instinct at the approach of every superior."

Observe how the vulgar, colloquial, "I like his Scotch impudence," becomes transmuted through the lips of our marchioness into the stately, "I admire his Caledonian assurance."

As a foil to this dialogue in high life, take the following: It is Gertrude, the heroine of the domestic circle, who speaks:—

"On a clear summer evening, when every object around us breathes peace and harmony, how quickly do our feelings assimilate with the glowing pencil of nature! We remember the occurrences of past life with mingled sensations of enthusiasm and delight. But reverse the scene: turn to a gloomy winter night, when the dimness of twilight shades the earth, and the snow-clad hills are scarcely discerned through a heavy fog: unite these with the half-extinguished fire, the loud barking of some churlish village curs, the melancholy sound of the wind rustling round the house and the pleasing powers of fancy will instantly be lost, or they will mingle with the most painful remembrances."

"But," said Mr. Lloyd, "reanimate the fire; close the shutters; and draw a cheerful circle around the tea-table; and joy again usurps the place of grief."

"True, my dear father; but then it is the situation which operates upon the mind."

"There are some things so grateful to remembrance," said Frederic, as he bent his eyes upon Gertrude's blushing face, "that neither the gloom of a December night, nor the benumbing frost of Russia, can ever efface them from the memory."

It is too late in the day to enquire what may have been the precise meaning of "feelings assimilating with the glowing pencil of nature." But, "re-animate the fire!" Did the small talk—woman's safety-valve now as then—of the family circle—rippling on unabated through all the storms that shook the great world of warriors and statesmen outside—flow in such grandiloquent periods, when this, our nineteenth century, was in its teens?

More the true child of an age that delighted in the sentimental woes of Amanda Fitzalan, heroine of *The Children of the Abbey*—of which weak type she is still a weaker copy—than even the alliteratively gay and giddy Charlotte, or the didactic Gertrude, is Marina, who—

("Almost breathless with the variety of emotions which agitated her bosom) looked wildly round, as if in search of some unexpected succour; when, to her inexpressible relief, she beheld Captain Mervil hastening toward them. She sprang forward to meet him, and, grasping his arm, with a look that penetrated his heart, exclaimed, "Oh! Mr. Mervil! let me conjure you to prevail on Mr. Tudway to return with you. If he attempts to proceed to the Lodge, you will see me expire at your feet."

Moral platitudes were also strewn with a liberal hand: "On the Value of Life," "The Use of Riches," "The Close of the Year," and the like.

Queer little items of information can be picked up here and there.

One would like an expert's opinion on a "segar," as it was then spelt—say, Captain Mervil's or the flattering Frederic's—manufactured ot—

"POTATOR TOBACCO.

"The College of Medicine of Stockholm have discovered that the leaves of the potatoe plant—dried in a peculiar manner—gives a tobacco far superior, in point of fragrance, to ordinary tobacco."

Illustrations, portraits of celebrities, fashionable costumes, and patterns of embroidered collars, habit shirts, and borders, accompanied each number.

The final pages were devoted to fashions and notices of births, marriages, and deaths.

Here is what was worn in August,

"Morning promenade dress of canary muslin, made very low, with long sleeves; small cap of thread lace, with cluster of flowers; hair in light loose curls on the temples."—

(Temples were "in" then. They indicated soul. It was the Byronic era.)

With one or two stray ringlets on the side the neck. A provencal poke bonnet of canary

coloured satin ribbon, to tie under the chin with ribbon of lilac, a small ostrich feather on one side. Necklace of white satin beads with a cross of gold. A white silk scarf with a broad border (at the ends) of flowers in needlework. Parasol of lilac, trimmed with white silk fringe; gloves of lilac or white kid. Shoes of black kid."

Evening dresses for the same month were robes of coloured crape:—

"Worn over white satin slips, made with short sleeves, low on the breast and the shoulders, rather narrower in the skirt than they have been, trimmed with a triple pleating of scalloped lace round bosom, sleeves, and feet. Bracer of ribbon to clasp in front."

"Frocks of rose or blush-coloured crape, trimmed with silvered ribbon, are worn by junior belles."

"A broad lace ruff to fall low on the back is a general appendage to the evening dress. Head-dress—the hair divided on the forehead in thin loose curls, turned up behind à la Greeque, with one or two stray ringlets falling negligently on the shoulder."

Such, one feels sure, was the coiffure of the too sensitive Marina.

"Necklace and ear-rings of cornelian, or white or coloured satin heads."

Now, happily, relegated to the little damsels of the Board School.

"Fan of frosted crepe. Slippers of white satin or colour to correspond with dress, with silver rosettes. Gloves of white kid."

"An occasional scarf of white silk with a broad border of needlework."

In what old chest lurk now those lovely, time-softened, occasional appendages of byegone beauty?

Further on we read, "that in half dresses the waist is made low with long sleeves." So that millinery Americanism, waist, Anglice bodice, is but a survival.

There are compensations in the life of a woman of to-day. She is not expected to live up to the level of the truly appalling Marina; and be ready to expire at a moment's notice, "from the variety of emotions which agitate her bosom."

The fourth novel, "The Dutch Patriots," in which in columns full of frothy declamations William the Silent belies his name, must be read to appreciate the

deliverance wrought by Scott from similar bombast.

But it is in the poetic page that sheer sentiment rises to its loftiest heights.

What does the reader think of the following poetic gem, the first of a series entitled, "The Tears of Ellen"?

OH! beating heart, thy anguish'd throe-Mute eye, thy lucid tear-Oh! mind, thy constant pang of woe-Sad breast, thy sigh of fear-Are still to Edward's mem'ry giv'n, By whom soft love has perish'd! Far be his recollection driv'n; No more by Ellen cherish'd! He knew my bosom's fondest sigh Was ever breath'd for him: He read love's language in mine eye, Now desolate and dim! He knew my heart was his alone :-He knew-but basely fled !-Now ev'ry moment hears my moan! Love, peace, and hope are dead!!

Here is the first verse of-

TRAR II.

My weak fond fancy wanders still To Edward's vow of duty, When, led by soft affection's will, He prais'd my brow of beauty.

Perhaps, like the wretched Edward, whose defection may be deplored but can scarcely be wondered at, the reader has had enough of the lachrymose Ellen.

In strict justice, however, the following lines must be given, to show that sentiment was not confined to the Fair Sex:-

Stanzas to JANE. My ev'ry sigh, my ev'ry tear, My ev'ry thought is thine: Why doom me then to chilling fear?

Why make mute mis'ry mine? One would be glad to learn that these two blighted beings met, and consoled each other for the faithless Jane and Edward.

This is an extract from a long poem with the affecting title :-

> THE OLD MAID'S REMONSTRANCE to her young Friends.

My heart is kind; and I can feel For others' sorrows, as my own. Oh! then, my youthful friends, reveal, Why always I am left alone.

Dear is to mis'ry's wayward child The secret tear, the silent sigh, . When the heart seems of grief beguil'd, But breathes its woe when none are nigh. *

I mark'd the summer-suns decay, And secret smil'd when they were gone The tedious winters pass'd away, While weary life was gliding on

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Soon shall the sullen strife be o'er; And, sharing in the common lot, This heart shall love and mourn no more And e'en Fitzhenry be forgot!

Contrast this broken-hearted spinster with the busy maiden lady of to-day, whose active life, full of a hundred-andone interests and aims, give her but scant time to indite mournful little ditties to the memory of even a Fitzhenry!

· It is with feelings of genuine relief that one lights on the following "gentleman's song," boastful and bellicose though it be:--

FRENCH TOAST.

THE toast of each Briton, in war's dread alarms,-

O'er bottle or bowl, is "Success to our Arms!"---

Attack'd, put to flight, and soon forc'd from each trench,

"Success to our Legs!" is the toast of the

Only a little over eighty years ago, and yet how antiquated the spirit in which most of the articles are written! In one of them occurs the expression—not used in a flippantly jocose way as now, but as a serious reality-"Secure from the dangers that await the unprotected female." "An elegant female—a lively and entertaining female—a female of refinement;" so the writers ring the changes on that happily nearly obsolete noun; as if there was something rather shocking in the name of woman!

There are protests, to the credit of our magazine be it said, against the practice of duelling; and the employment of unfortunate boys as chimney-sweepers.

rest mainly consists of scraps from books of travel. In one a certain American Colonel, in his comments on a Paris reception, rashly prophesied that the waltz would never become a current fashion in England or America. Anecdotes of Peter the Great in monthly instalments, one of them illustrated by an engraving representing Peter seizing a conspirator, both fittingly attired in the garb of ancient Rome; and selections from Voltaire—suitable for family reading—diversify the extracts.

IN OCTOBER.—"A Pyrenean mantle of Pomona green sarsnet, trimmed with vandykes of silk fringe of a shade darker than the mantle, bound with swansdown fur"

was the mode for walking costumes.

"The cottage spencer, made to fall off round the neck, is much worn as a morning dress. The colours are Pomona green, light blue, dove colour, appliqued with trimming of lace or swansdown."

And this truly magnificent head-dress for the evening:—

"The hair tied up in a gold net, with small bandeaux of diamonds in front, with the front hair falling negligently off the forehead, with a small sprig of coloured gems to represent natural flowers at one side. Large thin veils are general appendages to the head-dress. Necklace of coloured gems. Ear-rings of diamonds; bracelets and studs en suite."

An evening dress to be worn in winter was as follows:—

"A round robe of fine Georgian cloth of bright orange colour, made long and full; with bodice of pink satin, made low on the bosom and shoulders; with bracer of pink ribbon to correspond with the bodice. Full long sleeves of Georgian cloth. Tippet of swansdown or marten fur. The hair in full dishevelled curls on the front, to fall low on the temples, and turned up behind in a small knot, a wreath of flowers on the top, a loose ringlet on one side. Slippers of orange-coloured velvet, with rosettes of silver. Gloves of lemon-coloured kid. Ear-rings of pearl. Necklace, a triple gold chain, confined in front with amber-coloured gems."

"Pelisse and mantle of orange, brown, or fawncoloured cloth, trimmed with sealskin fur, made large and full, (the pelisse ornamented with buttons à la militaire, and trimmed down the front, "t the feet, and wrists with sealskin fur), are generally adopted for carriage costumes, worn over high morning dresses of white or figured muslin. Caps of seal fur. The most general in request is the cap à la Russe, scalp crown, turn up poke front."

Everything à la Russe—from Peter the Great down to the sealskin cap, was popular in England then, as it is now in France.

"Pelisses and mantles, some trimmed with lace and lined with fur, were also of willow-green, flame, maroon and scarlet colour."

Here is a description of a marvellous hat:—

"Lady Wellington's cottage hat, composed of white satin and lace; the sides composed of small perpendicular plaitings of satin; the top plain, with a small silk tassel; turned up round the front; finished at the edge in vandykes, bound with knotted chenille; a small cluster of cornflowers on one side. Under the hat is a small lace cap, made high to show the forehead, with a small sprig of flowers."

There is magic in a pretty face, that turns all fashions—no matter how bizarre—into a fitting framework for its beauty.

Nevertheless, in the interests of less favoured sisters, it is to be hoped there will be no patriotic revival of the "Lady Wellington's Cottage Hat."

But here the chastening reflection intervenes, what will our descendants think of the towering headgear, the too expansive sleeves, of to day?

And our clumsy domestic appliances; and inadequate modes of transit; the—to them — inexplicable limitations of science; unredressed political wrongs; ineffectual methods of dealing with glaring social evils; savage sports; brutal crimes; archaic punishments; the hundred and one faults and follies and cruelties—invisible to our eyes, looming large to the astonished gaze of posterity, as portrayed in that history of our own times—the daily press?

After all, human nature is human nature in all ages—in all fashions—in a Lady Wellington's Cottage—or a Matinée hat.

That is a platitude worthy of the excellent Gertrude.



THE REAPER.

Drawn by W. Arthur Rouse.

THE JOLER



March

THE VEILED MAN:*

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THE RISKS AND ADVENTURES OF SIDI AHAMADOU, SHEIKH OF THE AZJAR MARAUDERS.

BY WILLIAM LE QUEUX.

ILLUSTRATED BY WARWICK GOBLE.

VI.—THE EVIL OF THE THOUSAND EYES.

THE camp-fire was dying in the gloomy hour before the dawn. In the Great Desert the light comes early from the faroff Holy City, golden as the Prophet's glory, to light our footsteps in those trackless, waterless wastes which are shunned by man, and forgotten by Allah. My tribesmen of the Azjar, still wrapped in their black veils, were sleeping soundly prior to the long march of the coming day, and all was quiet save the howling of a desert-fox, and the shuffling tread of the sentries as they traversed the camp from end to end, silent and weird in their long black burnooses and veils. Alone, I was sitting gazing into the dying embers, deep in thought. I had been unable to sleep, for a strange premonition of danger oppressed me. We were in the country of the Taïtok, a tribe of pure Arabs, fierce in battle, who, when united with the Kel-Rhela, their neighbours, were among our most formidable opponents. Sheikhs of both tribes had made treaty with the French, and placed their country beneath the protection of the tricolour of the Infidels, therefore in our expedition against their town of Azal we knew that we must meet with considerable opposition.

We had exercised every caution in our advance, travelling by various ancient dried-up watercourses known only to us "The Breath of the Wind," approaching in secret the town we intended to loot and burn as a reprisal for an attack made

upon us a month before. But the report of a spy who had gone forward to Azal was exceedingly discouraging. The French had occupied the Kasbah, the red-burnoosed Spahis were swaggering about the streets and market-places, while the tricolour floated over the citygate, and the fierce fighting-men of the Taïtok were now fearless of any invader. It was this report which caused me considerable uneasiness, and I was calmly reflecting whether to turn off to the east into the barren Ahaggar or to push forward and measure our strength with our enemies, the Infidels, when suddenly my eyes, sharpened by a lifetime of desert wandering, detected a dark crouching figure moving in the gloom at a little distance from me. In an instant I snatched up my rifle and covered it. Unconscious of how near death was, the mysterious stranger still moved slowly across, lying upon his stomach and dragging himself along the sand in the direction of my tent. As I looked, a slight flash caught my eye. It was the gleam of the flickering flame upon burnished steel. The man held a knife, and at the door of my tent raised himself before entering, then disappeared within.

Quick as thought I jumped up, drew my keen double-edged jambiyah from my girdle, and noiselessly sped towards my tent, drawing aside the flap, and dashing in to capture the intruder.

The dark figure was bending over

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"Thou art my priscner!" I cried.

a portfolio wherein I keep certain writings belonging to the tribe, the compacts of friends and the threats of foes.

"Thou art my prisoner!" I cried fiercely, halting inside, casting aside my knife and raising my rifle.

The figure turned quickly with a slight scream, and by the feeble light of my hanging-lamp. I was amazed to detect the features of a woman, young, beautiful, with a face almost as white as those of the English women who come to Biskra at Ramadan.

"Mercy, O Ahamadou!" she implored, next second casting herself upon her knees before me. "True, I have fallen prisoner into thine hands, but the Book of Everlasting Will saith that thou shalt neither hold in slavery nor kill those who art thy friends. I crave thy mercy, for indeed I am thy friend."

"Yet thou seekest my life with that knife in thine hand!" I cried in anger. "Whence comest thou?" I demanded, for her Arabic was a dialect entirely strange to me.

"From a country afar—a region which no man knoweth," she answered.

"The country of the Azjar is the whole of the Great Desert," I answered, with pride. "Every rock and every wady is known unto them."

"Not every wady," she replied, smiling mysteriously. "They know not the Land of Akkar, nor the City of the Golden Tombs."

"The Land of Akkar!" I gasped, for Akkar was a region which only existed in the legendary lore of the Bedouins, and was supposed to be a fabulous country, wherein lived a mysterious race of white people, and where was concealed the enormous treasure captured during the Mussulman Conquest. "Knowest thou actually the position of the wondrous Land of Akkar?"

"It is my home," she answered in soft

sibilation, as stretching forth my hand I motioned her to rise. I saw that her beauty and grace were perfect. She wore no veil, but her dark robe was dusty and stained by long travel, while her striking beauty was enhanced by a string of cut emeralds of great size and lustre across her brow, in place of the sequins with which our women decorate themselves. She wore no other jewels, save a single diamond upon the index-finger of the right hand, a stone of wondrous size and brilliancy. It seemed to gleam like some monster eye as she sank upon the divan near, a slight sigh of fatigue escaping her.

"And thy name?" I enquired.

"Nara, daughter of Kiagor," she answered. "And thou art the great Ahamadou, whom all men fear, from Lake Chad even unto the confines of Algeria, the leader of the dreaded 'Breath of the Wind.' In our unknown land reports of thy prowess and ferocity in the fight, of thy leniency towards the women and children of thine enemies, have already reached us, therefore I travelled alone to seek thee."

And she looked up into my face, her full red lips parted in a smile.

"Why?" I enquired, puzzled.

"Because I crave the protection of thine hosts of black-veiled warriors," she answered. "Our land of Akkar is threatened by an invasion of the Infidel English, who have sent two spies northward from the Niger. May Allah burn their vitals. They succeeded in penetrating into our mountain fastness, and were captured by One was killed, but the our scouts. other escaped. He has, undoubtedly, gone back to his own people; and they will advance upon us, for they are a nation the most powerful and most fearless in all the world."

"Of a verity thy lips utter truth," I observed, "for we once fought in the Dervish ranks against the English on the Nile bank, and were cut down like sun-

dried grass before the scythe. But who hath sent thee as messenger to me?"

"I come on my own behalf," she responded. "I am ruler of the Akkar."

It was strange, sitting there in conversation with the ruler of a mysterious region, in the existence of which every Arab in the Soudan and the Sahara firmly believed, yet had never set foot in the legendary country, the fabulous wealth and strange sights of which were related by every story-teller from Khartoum even unto Timbuktu. And yet Nara, the Queen of Akkar, was a guest within my camp, and had fallen upon her knees before me in supplication. Ambition was fired within me to visit her wondrous land of the silent dead, and I announced my readiness to effect a treaty with her, first accompanying her alone to see the wonders of her mystic realm. As I spoke, however, a curious change appeared to come over her. Her face flushed slightly, her eyes gleamed with a fiery glance, and there was a hardness about her mouth, which, for one brief moment, caused me suspicion.

"Thou art welcome, O Ahamadou!" she answered, smiling bewitchingly next instant. "We will start even now, if thou wilt, for no time must be lost ere thine armed men unite with the guards of my kingdom to resist the accursed English, that white-faced tribe whom Eblis hath marked as his own. Let us speed on the wings of haste, and within a week thou mayest be back here within thine own camp."

And she rose in readiness to go forth. "My meheri is tethered behind you rock," she continued, pointing out beyond the camp where a great dark rock loomed forth against the fast-clearing sky. "Join me there, and I will guide thy footsteps unto my City of the Golden Tombs."

Whilst she went forth secretly I called Malela, son of Tamaher, and imparted to him the circumstances, telling him of my intention to go secretly to Akkar, and

giving him instructions how to preserve from the tribe the fact that I was absent. Malela was one of the fiercest of desert-pirates, as valiant a man as ever drew a *iambiyah* against an enemy; but when I mentioned my intended visit to the silent legendary land, the wealth and terrors of which he had heard hundreds of times from the lips of the story-tellers and the marabouts, his face paled beneath its bronze.

"May the One of Praise envelop thee with the cloak of His protection," he ejaculated with heartfelt fervency. "Have we not heard of the awful tortures of those in the mute land—the mysterious region which the Moors have declared to be the veritable dwelling-place of Eblis, the region inhabited by those who have served the Devil and refused both the blessings of Allah and the intercessions of the Prophet?"

"Are not the Azjar without fear, and is not Ahamadou their leader?" I asked proudly, reflecting upon Nara's marvellous beauty, and feeling an intense curiosity to visit the country wherein no man had hitherto set foot. Again, had not the Queen of Akkar singled out the Veiled Men of the Azjar as her allies against the eaters of unclean meat, the Infidels whose bodies Allah will burn with his all-consuming fire?

Again Malela uttered a prayer to the One, as he stood facing the Holy Ca'aba, and I, too, murmured a sûra as I thrust some cartridges intomy pouch, drew tighter my belt with its amulets sewn within, and buckled on my sword with the wondrous jewel in the hilt—the mark of chieftain-ship—for I was to be guest of the Queen of an unknown land.

Then with a whispered farewell to the dead Sheikh's son, I stole forth, treading softly among my sleeping tribesmen, and carefully avoiding the sentries until I came to my own swift camel, which I mounted, and a few minutes later joined my handsome guide. She had already

mounted, and had twisted a white haick about her face until only her eyes and the row of jewels across her brow remained visible.

It is needless to recount the long breathless days we spent together in journeying westward, resting by day and travelling ever in the track of the blood-red afterglow, until we came upon a range of giant snow-crested mountains, as great as the monster Atlas, that loom as a barrier between ourselves, and the so-called civilisation of the Franks.

"Yonder," she said, pointing to them, when first their grandeur burst upon our view in the pale rose of dawn. "Yonder is our land which none can enter, save those who know the secret way. There are but two entrances—one here and the other far south, the way through which the English have unfortunately discovered."

"Then on all sides but one thy kingdom is impregnable," I observed, gazing with amazement at the serrated barrier, which seemed to rise until it reached the misty cloud-land.

"On all but one," she answered. "Those who know not the secret must meet with death, because of the dangers by which Akkar is surrounded as safeguards against her enemies."

Throughout two days we travelled, slowly approaching the snowy range, and one night we halted beside a narrow lake, beyond which was practically an impassable barrier of rugged cliffs and towering mountains. The night was moonless, and as I laid down to sleep only the rippling of the water lapping the pebbles broke the appalling stillness. At last, however, I dropped off into a heavy slumber, and was only awakened by a strange roar in my ears, like the thunder of a cataract.

I put forth my hand and tried to open my eyes, but both efforts were alike useless. To my amazement I found my hands secured behind me, and my eyes blindfolded.

Then, in an instant, it occurred to me that I had been entrapped. I struggled and fought to free myself, for the air was hot and stifling, and I felt myself being asphyxiated with a deadening roar in my ears, and a close indescribable odour in my nostrils. In my attempt to tear the irritating bandage from my eyes my head came suddenly into contact with something soft. I placed my cheek against it, and found to my amazement that I was lying on some kind of silken divan, my head supported by an embroidered cushion of the kind usual in our harems. But the odour about me was not the intoxicating fragrance of burning pastilles, but a damp mouldy smell, as of a chamber long closed.

How long my mental torture and sense of utter helplessness continued I know not. All I recollect is that, of a sudden, the air seemed fresher and cooler, the thunder of the waters died away instantly, and the smell of the charnel-house gave place to a delicate perfume of fresh flowers. There was a genial warmth upon my cheeks, and I awakened to the fact that the sun was shining upon me, when I felt a hand unloosen the bandage tied behind my head, and heard the voice of Nara say:

"Lo, the danger is past. Thou art in Akkar," and she drew away the piece of black folded silk that had held me without vision.

In abject amazement I looked around stupefied. We were together in a kind of boat shaped like an inverted funnel, which opened only at the top and could be closed at will by a complicated arrangement of levers and wire ropes, a subaquatic vessel fitted with comfortable lounges, having a lighted lamp hanging in the centre. Everything—seats, table, and all the fittings—swung in rings, therefore whichever way the boat rolled, even though it might turn complete somersaults, those riding in it could remain seated without inconvenience. On looking back I saw that the narrow

stream we were navigating was fed by a mighty torrent that rushed from the mountain-side, a roaring, boiling flood which sent up a great column of spray, reflecting in the sunlight all the colours of the spectrum, and I also observed that we had entered the Land of Akkar by means of that strangely-shaped boat of bolted iron plates as strong as the warships of the Infidels, and were now in a deep and fertile valley, having descended from the lake by an unknown subterranean watercourse through the very heart of the giant mountain.

I gazed about me in blank amazement, for even as my conductress spoke she deftly stretched forth a pole and arrested the progress of the boat at a flight of wellworn steps, while above my wondering eyes fell upon the great white *façade* of a palace with an enormous gilded dome.

"Yonder is my dwelling-place," she explained with a wave of the hand, and as we stepped upon the bank a crowd of fierce-looking armed warriors appeared, raising their spears high in salutation.

"This is Ahamadou," she explained, "the dreaded Sheikh of the Azjar, who hath come to make brotherhood with us. He is guest of Nara, thy Ruler."

"Welcome, O Ahamadou!" they cried, with one voice. "Of a verity thou art the lion of the desert, for the leader of the Breath of the Wind' knoweth not fear."

"I am thy friend, O friends," I answered, as by Nara's side I strode onward to the wondrous palace, so magnificent, yet of such delicate architecture that one marvelled how human hands could have fashioned it. The country I had entered was red with flowers and green with many leaves; a fruitful peaceful region, the spires and domes of the great City of the Golden Tombs rising in the distance far down the valley, white and clear-cut as cameos against the liquid gold of the sunset.

Together we ascended the long flight of marble steps which led to the great colonnade, and gave entrance to a palace of similar design to those of the ancient palaces of Egypt in those forgotten days long before the Prophet. As our feet touched the last step the air was rent by a fanfare of a hundred trumpets, causing the valley to re-echo. Then a file of armed men, headed by the blood-red banner of Akkar, lined our route, bowing low as we passed on into a hall, high vaulted and of enormous proportions, in the centre of which stood a wonderful throne of gold. covered with hundreds upon hundreds of eyes of every variety and size, wrought in gems to imitate those of human beings and of animals. As I gazed upon it I suddenly recollected what I had heard from the story-tellers about this wondrous seat of Akkar's Queen. It was the ancient throne whereon for nearly two thousand years the rulers of the City of the Golden Tombs had sat, and was known in legendary lore as the Seat of the Thousand Eyes, each eye recording a battle, and being formed of the greatest gem taken in the loot on that occasion. As I approached I saw that some were of diamonds, others of rubies, of emeralds, of jade, of jacinth. of jasper, of pearl, and of sapphires, each perfectly formed, but some kindly-looking, while on others the expression was that of terror, of hatred, or of agony, truly the strangest and weirdest seat of royalty in all the world.

Around me the excitement rose to feverheat as the people assembled, and Nara seated herself upon the throne after casting aside the travel-stained haick she had worn on the journey. I saw everywhere evidence of unbounded riches. The silken robes of the courtiers were sewn with jewels, and as their queen sank among her soft cushions, and her women put upon her necklaces and anklets of enormous worth, the great chamber became filled with the clank of arms and the murmur of many voices, while I was closely scrutinised and my appearance commented upon. Suddenly the great Oueen rose, lifting her arms, and, with an

expression of uncontrollable anger upon her white face, said:

"Lo, my people, hear this my word! I have travelled afar into the country of our enemies, and have brought hither the person of Ahamadou, their chief."

"I am not thine enemy, O Queen!" I hastened to assure her. "Thine ally, if thou wilt."

"I have brought hither this man," she cried, "I have brought him hither in fulfilment of my oath in order that punishment shall be meted out to him."

"Punishment!" I gasped, wondering if I had taken leave of my senses.

"Remember, that this man is Ahamadou, chief of the pirates who have captured so many of our caravans, and who slew my son Kourra, heir to this my throne, six moons ago!" she cried, in a paroxysm of rage, lifting her thin bare arms, her face growing hideous in her fearful ebullition of anger. I saw that I had fallen helplessly into the hands of my enemies, and bit my lip without uttering a single word. To escape from that unexplored rock-bound kingdom was hopeless. I could only show them that fear dwelleth not in the heart of the Azjar, even though thousands lifted their hands against him.

"I have," she cried, "sought out this man alone and unaided, according to the oath I took before the sacred Scarabæus upon the Throne of the Thousand Eyes, and conducted him hither in order that ye may pass judgment upon him. Speak, say what torture shall he undergo!"

In an instant the air was rent by loud cries of—

"Let the Scarabæus devour him! Let him witness the torture of the spies, and afterwards let the same be applied to him! Let him die the most terrible of all deaths; let the Sacred Beetle crush him beneath its fangs!"

A dozen men, aged, white-robed, with beards so long that some almost swept the ground, which I judged were priests, held brief consultation: then, amid the uproar, they seized me, wrenched from me my arms, and led me away ere I could raise my voice to charge their dreaded ruler with treachery. Followed by the jeering excited multitude, they conducted me along the wide level road to the mysterious city, upon the high gates of which were mounted strong guards, with breast-plates, whereon the image of the sacred beetle was worked in crimson, and through great streets and squares until we came to a huge mosque-like structure, the three golden domes of which I had noticed glittering afar as the dying rays of the sunset slanted upon them.

The dimly-lit interior was magnificent, but as they dragged me forward, I saw placed beneath the central dome a colossal figure of the sacred Scarabæus a hundred feet in height and two hundred feet square, worked out of solid gold. From the two hideous eyes shone lines of white light, like the rays of the searchlights of the Infidels, while, by some mechanical contrivance, the wide mouth now and then opened and closed, as if the monstrous emblem of the eternal were eager to devour those who worshipped before it.

The bearded priests who held me threw themselves upon their knees before it in adoration, uttering a low kind of chant, while almost at the same instant a quivering terrified man, haggard, thin, and bearing signs of long imprisonment, was dragged forth from a kind of cell in the colossal walls, and made to bend upon his knees upon a grey circular stone immediately before the monster Throat of Death.

"No! no!" he shrieked in horror.

"Kill me by the sword! Let my body be given to the alligators—anything—but spare me the torture of the Beetle! I am innocent! It is but Nara's love of bloodshed and torture of the flesh tha-



I knew that a fearful and agonising death was nigh.

hath caused her to condemn me. May the curse of the Beetle be ever upon her!"

Ere he could utter another word six black slaves, veritable giants in stature, seized the unfortunate wretch, and as the mouth of the monster again opened they flung him headlong into it.

Next second the cruel terrible mouth closed, and the shrieks and crushing of bones told how terrible was the torture of the human victim within its insatiable maw.

The sight caused me to shudder. To this frightful ignominious death had that fair-faced, soft-spoken woman condemned me.

Again the enormous golden jaws opened, and again as they closed the victim's piercing shrieks told that his agony was renewed, and that death did not come quickly within that weird colossal figure of the insect, once held sacred from the shores of the Red Sea unto the great black ocean. In this the last place in all the world where its worship still remained, the people were the most cruel and relentless of any in our great dark continent, Africa. A dozen times the mouth opened and closed, and each occasion the cries of the agonised man were frightful to hear, until at last they died away, and as they did so the light also died from the monster's eyes.

Soon, however, another thin cringing man, starved almost to a skeleton, was brought forth, and with similar scant ceremony was cast into the colossal jaws, whereupon the light in the giant eyes grew brilliant again, and the shrieks for release as the mouth reopened were only answered by the loud jeers of the assembled multitude, by this time increased until every part of the magnificent building was crowded to suffocation, while at that instant Nara, still upon the Seat of the Thousand Eyes, was dragged in by a crowd of nearly a thousand persons. Twelve black slaves were slowly fanning

her as she sat, her chin resting upon her hand, watching in silence.

One after another were victims brought forth and hurled to the horrible monster to be slowly cut to pieces by the myriad gleaming knives and fine-edged saws set within those terrible jaws, until at last someone in the crowd cried out with a loud voice,

"Let the pirate Ahamadou die! His men killed our Prince, the valiant Kourra, therefore no mercy shall be shown the Veiled Man. Let him be given to the Sacred Beetle!"

In an instant the cry was taken up on every hand. "Let him die!" they shouted wildly. "Let us witness his body being cut to ribbons!"

The priests hesitated, while in that perilous moment I repeated a sûra, and heeded not these Infidel worshippers of insects and idolators of golden effigies.

But at a sign from Nara, the relentless figure in white seated upon her wondrous Throne of the Thousand Eyes, they seized me, forced me to kneel upon the circular stone, and then, as those hideous jaws opened with a swift movement, they lifted me and cast me in.

For an instant my head reeled, and all breath left me, for I knew that a fearful agonising death was nigh; but as Allah willed it, I alighted upon my feet, and finding in the darkness that the floor sloped down, I started running with all my might, gashing myself upon the knives, set upright like teeth, but nevertheless speedily forward, heedless of the pain. Slowly and surely the walls of that strange torture-chamber closed about me with a creaking and groaning horrible to hear, until I found myself squeezed tightly with irresistible force on every side. I held my breath, for upon my chest was a great weight, and I knew that next instant my frame must be crushed to pulp.

Slowly, however, almost imperceptibly, the frightful pressure upon my body began to relax, and ere I realised the welcome truth I found myself able to breathe By dashing forward I had advanced far down the dreaded Throat of Death to a point where the passage began to widen, and by the freshness of the air I now felt that some outlet lay beyond. Therefore, without hesitation, I sped again onward, stumbling over some soft objects on the ground, which I instinctively knew to be the remains of my fellow victims, until a faint grey glimmer of light showed in the distance. The floor still sloped steeply, and by feeling about me, I discovered that the Throat was now simply a natural burrow in the rock.

Without loss of a second I soon gained the outlet, and peered forth, amazed to discover that the tunnel ended abruptly in the face of a bare precipice; and that in the valley some two hundred feet below lay a great heap of sun-bleached bones, the remains of those who had passed through the Throat of Death. Undoubtedly, when the channel became choked with the rotting remains of the victims they were cast forth to the vultures and the wolves.

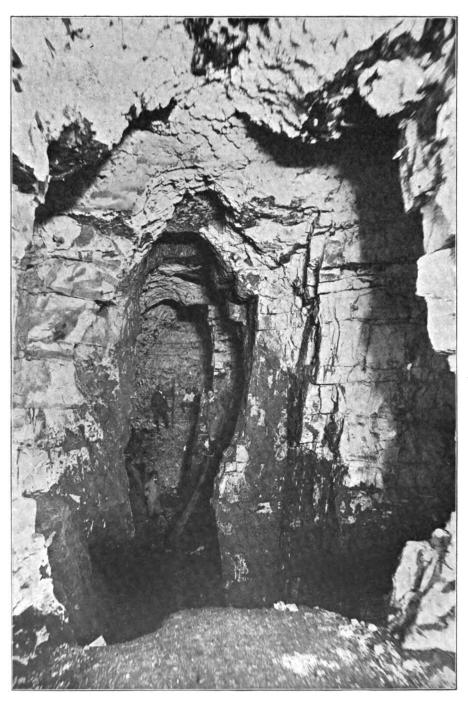
Eager to escape from the noisome place, I climbed down the rocky face of the mountain, and on gaining the valley quickly recognised, with satisfaction, that I was actually beyond the confines of the accursed Land of Akkar. Truly I had encountered death as a very near neighbour. The high range with their snowy crests were the same as my treacherous

guide had pointed out to me, and next day I skirted the lake which, emptying itself by the subterranean river, gave entrance to the mystic land of Nara. Through many weary weeks I travelled hither and thither, ill and half-starved, until at length I fell in with a camel caravan, and, travelling with them to Ideles, subsequently rejoined my own tribesmen, who had by that time begun to despair of my safety.

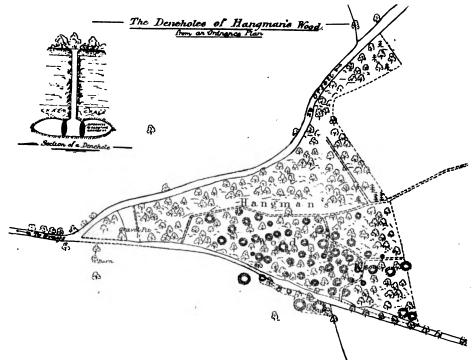
Within six moons I made a report of the mysterious land and all that I had witnessed therein to the Bureau Arabe in Algiers, and ere six more moons had waned the Franks sent an armed expedition to enter and explore the country. Of this expedition I was appointed guide, all past offences of my tribesmen being forgiven, but the soldiers of Nara offering a determined resistance, their country was at once subdued and occupied by the white conquerors. The sacred Scarabæus was destroyed by dynamite, and the Throat of Death widened until it now forms one of the entrances to the land so long The dreaded Nara was sent as prisoner down to Senegal, where she still lives in exile, but her wondrous throne still remains in her great white palace—now a barrack of the Spahis and Chasseurs—and the Arab story-tellers in every desert town from the Atlas to Lake Chad continue to relate weird and wonderful tales of the City of the Golden Tombs and the Evil of the Thousand Eyes.

[THE END.]





The Deneholes of Hangman's Wood. View of the portion excavated, showing the old level of the floor.



Plan of Hangman's Wood showing relative position of Deneholes to each other.

THE DENEHOLES OF HANGMAN'S WOOD.

BY W. H. HAMER.

ILLUSTRATED BY SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE PHOTOGRAPHIC ASSOCIATION 16, BROOK STREET, W.

I N a pretty copse, removed far from the bustle of the outside world, yet within one hour's ride of where its great heart beats loudest, hidden by bramble where the blackcap nests, and surrounded in the springtime by the silver may which the nightingale loves, may be found underground problems which have puzzled our eminent archæologists, and which, after long study, they still call unsolved.

By means of the unique series of pictures illustrating this article, the interested reader may now study the interior of the Deneholes without making a descent—for never previously have photos of these interesting caves been published, and by many the question

will doubtless be asked, "What is a Denehole?"

Well, we can readily explain what a Denehole is, for have we not seventy-two of them within this little wood of four acres, where we can sit among the bracken and the harebell, surrounded by the scent of honeysuckle or perfume of violets, to discuss our subject, or perhaps on some bright October day can watch the great brown spider weave his web of filmy gauze across their opening, as if to wrap in further romance the mystery which lies unsolved below?

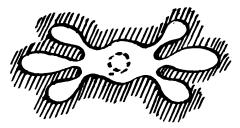
A Denehole then, as we know them where they are most closely congregated, is a subterranean cavern, the approach to



The Descent.

which is a vertical shaft varying from eighty to one hundred feet in depth and from three to four feet in diameter. At the foot of this shaft is a kind of vestibule from which spring six chambers, which throughout the series are curiously symmetrical. The accompanying sectional plan will best convey an idea of their shape, and the plan on the previous page will show how closely together they were sunk in this limited area.

These curiosities are not confined to



Sectional plan of a Denehole.

Hangman's Wood alone, but may be found on the opposite shore of the Thames in Kent also, though there they are less numerous.

The chambers are approximately thirty feet in length, twelve in breadth, and eighteen in height, and in this particular locality are all in the solid white chalk. The total quantity of excavation in each Denehole would be roughly from 1,300 to 1,60c tons.

Originally, it is said that though within a few inches of each other no two petals of the adjoining caves communicated; but thanks to the energy and diligent research

of the Essex Field Club, under the guidance of Mr. Miller Christy—probably the best authority upon the subject—it is now possible to wander underground from chamber to chamber by means of small connecting passages which have been cut through without in any way destroying the symmetry or interfering with an exact conception of what these caverns originally have been.

By the courtesy of their owner, Mr. F. C. Whitmore, we were enabled to make the interesting investigation, and reached the bottom, slung in a seat suspended by a rope as shown in the picture. They are out of the way and seldom visited, and but for previous knowledge to the contrary, one would have thought they ended with the seeming bottom of the shaft whereon one landed; but move the dead boughs and earth which have accumulated

there and the dark entrances gradually grow greater till one can pass through into the blackness beyond; but we have candles with us, and almost certainly for the first time in their unwritten history the flash of an electric lamp lights up their darkest recesses. We wander on, lighting up the ledges as we go, and must, indeed, go warily, for there are pitfalls in the way. Stumbling betimes upon the large loose chalks, rubbing shoulders in the narrow passages, brushing with our backs the ceilings of the tunnels through which we crawl on bended knee, climbing then through horseshoe openings, we scale the chalk wall which once separated two chambers, and pass on by winding ways far as the maze will take us. Here and there a faint ghostly silver tints the pyramids of chalk which are found piled up where the caverns are largest, and going to these we may look up to the blue sky and passing clouds, for we are below another shaft, down which the June sunshine sends a welcome ray. The air is cool and damp, and the walls have that thin film over their surface peculiar to moist chalk.

Points of vantage were then chosen from which the operator could obtain his photographs; and here again was probably another record; for, as already stated, it is believed they have not been photographed before, and his delicate appliances seemed strangely out of place.

It must be remembered that but for the candles, all around was black as night, except when the light of applied science flashed forth, picking out in grim

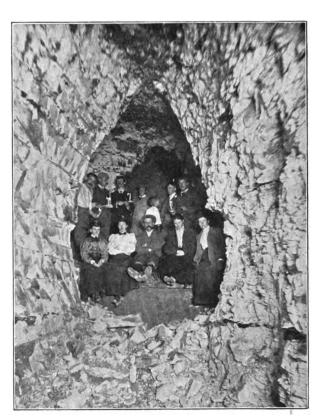


Preparations for descending a Denehole.

and gaunt reality the Mephistophelian figures working their strange appliances in strange places with that exactness which we believed to exist only in the stage world of fairy pantomime. And now that we are actually in them, you may ask, "But what were Deneholes?" Then, since we have no new theory to

offer, and do not desire to confound confusion, we can but give you the suggestions of theorists and experts, though it is said those who know most of them say least.

One's first impression is that they were chalk quarries; butwhyhave tunnelled and used such care to avoid intercommunication when the outcrop of the chalk is but a mile or so away?



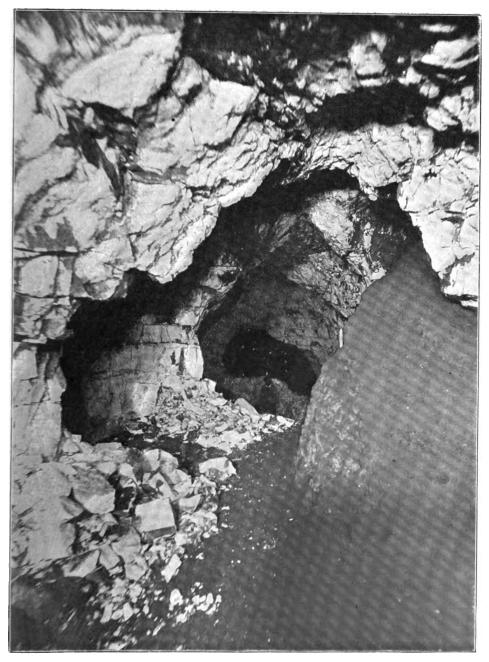
In a Denehole eighty feet below the surface.

Yet there were no trade unions and no organised strikes in those days; labour was not only cheap, but often forced slavery; or the work may have been carried out by ready hands, working willingly for mutual benefit and protection. Again, consider the labour of excavating 1,600 tons of chalk, and passing it out of a narrow shaft with such appliances as could have existed then—even to-day we should consider it somewhat of an undertaking.

Were they then pits from which the black flints could be obtained by warriors to fashion their rude weapons? It would seem not; for, again, why of this shape and so symmetrical, once the flinty strata had been found, rather than one continuous open pit? Yet worked flints have been discovered there.

Could they have formed store-houses for foodstuffs, or living rooms for cavedwellers? Hardly, for what would become of corn stored in such a granary? No light, no ventilation; cold, damp, and clammy: and how long, we wonder. could their assumed occupants have withstood the evils incident to such surroundings?

Strategy alone surely opposes the suggestion of their use as hiding-places from an enemy, for where more effectually could an opposition be starved out, if not subjected to a quicker means of destruction? Rumour has it that they are the deserted gold mines of King Cunobeline; and perhaps this of all may be dismissed as the most highly imaginative and impossible. Can they have been burial-places? there are no evidences of



View showing sequence of chambers.

(The white specks in the dark portion in the centre are candles stretching away into the distance.)

such. Were they dungeons? or did the priests of these strange people carry out their sacrificial rights therein? And now we seem farther off than ever from an elucidation of our query.

So long ago as 1610 they were spoken of by Camden in his *Britannia*, and in 1818 Dereham wrote an account of an exploration of them.

Some say that they date back to the early Britons, some that the Danish invaders formed them, others that they may be assigned to the Romans; but usually the latter left evidences of their occupation behind. For long years these pitmouths were left unguarded, but strangely enough, one seldom heard of accident; for, though open to the road, children seem to look on Hangman's Wood with awe: its name seems enough for them, and they avoid it.

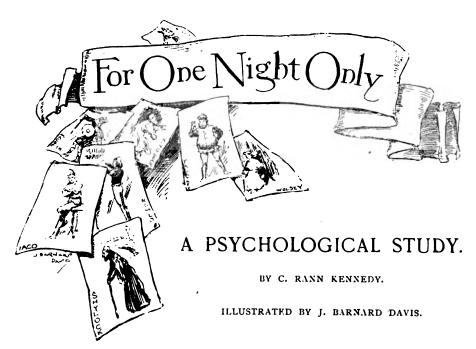
Old inhabitants cannot say how it got its gruesome name; and the Deneholes are not without their tragedy, for the skeleton of a man and horse have, it is said, been found below, unfortunate sheep have been discovered dead, and there, in in the walls, are the claw-marks of dogs, foxes, badgers, and other animals which have apparently vainly striven to reach the light which penetrated down the shafts where their scratching has been deepest. Theirs has been a slow star-

The only denizens now appear vation. to be mice, bats, and black-beetles. For whatever purpose they were intended they were palpably chosen on a point of vantage, for from this eminence on the crest of the uplands, above the marshes, a long stretch of the lower Thames lies exposed to view, and one can imagine the changed circumstances of a shallow inland sea (of which only the trained and narrow channel of the Thames now remains) stretching away across the marshlands to the foot of the rising ground, and can readily picture the husbandman or the warrior clad in sheepskin and sandals, and with long straggling hair, watching either the return of the coracles from the fishing ground, or eyeing the suspicious movements of invaders.

A wood may have existed then as now, but now the marshlands give rich pasture where then the ocean rolled, and warriors watch no longer for the enemy that comes no more. All now is gentle peace.

Fitting accompaniments to the unsolved mystery of these romantic caverns are the weird black bats which haunt them and their surroundings in the gathering gloom; or perchance the startled scream of that moonlight tragedy, when the great white owl swoops down upon her unlucky prey and wakes the dead echoes of the Deneholes of Hangman's Wood.





DMOND WYNSTAY, scholar and actor, had electrified the great heart of the metropolis. A flight of brilliant successes, each one more pronounced than its predecessor, does not commonly fall to the lot of even old and experienced players; but to him, young, unpractised, hitherto unknown, the gift had been granted. One short year and a half had worked the spell; his fame was made, and London went wild with enthusiasm.

Affairs in the dramatic world for a long time had fallen flat. The usual productions had dribbled out religiously, with damnable reiteration; problem plays, musical comedies, broad burlesques, occasionally romantic dramas in a society drawl, or vapid attempts at Shakespeare. Admirable staging, archæological exactitude of scene and costume, elocution, gesture, technique generally, brought to an exquisite point of perfection: all these things were present, yet there was lacking that inner force, that Promethean

flame, that terrible, wonderful, creative spirit, whereby alone the dry bones in the valley of art may take flesh and live. Receipts were falling off; syndicate shares were no longer at a premium; managers were becoming anxious; things were so bad that even the critics were getting tired of endless adulation, and longed for something good to vilify.

Then Edmond Wynstay appeared.

The man looked great. The figure firm, well-knit, graceful as a Greck athlete's, instinct with noble movement; the clear-cut cameo face, calm with scholarship, and the pathetic beauty that comes of perfect mastery of passion; the great volcanic eyes, themselves unfathomable, yet possessed of that intuitive piercing quality which goes straight to human hearts: these, combined with a marvellous power of personal magnetism—without which no great player is possible—stamped Edmond Wynstay with the birthmark of genius, an inheritance his indivi-

dual effort only tended more and more to ratify.

His art was supreme, since it was based upon a right and healthy vision of life, carried into effect by continual sacrifice, and quick with that prophetic fire, which lies at the heart of all high creative activity. People said of his playing that it left them with a larger sense of life, a kindlier love of humanity, a deeper insight into the divinity of our common nature.

It was his Iago that first took London by storm. This was no mere stagey traitor of struts and eyebrows and obvious villainies of gesture, but the polished creation of Shakespeare's fancy; subtle, watchful, assuming a careless cynicism to perfect delicacy of sting—a sting sheathed in velvet. The inevitableness of the character, the logic—the justification of it even—was brought home to the audience by a clever craft of impersonation, so that they felt a certain sympathy and communion with it, whilst not losing sight of the larger moral issues to which it was related.

This was followed by his *Romeo*, who became, under his artistic touch, no longer the traditional moonstruck young man of mawkish tears and sentiment, but a splendid catholic type of lofty and pure passion, bringing to a head the inchoate strivings and tendencies of all hearts, with a directness of idealism worthy of the mighty singer that conceived it.

The distraction and pathos of Shylock; the crude, honest, well-meaning of Bottom, the weaver, so tenderly shown to balance his uncouthness and lack of imagination; Macbeth, physically brave, morally weak; Falstaff, unctuously human; Wolsey, of the great soul warped by statecraft and ambition; King Lear—all, in turn, were made to fascinate and charm by the glamour of Edmond Wynstay's genius.

Last of all came his *Hamlet*, a creation absolutely beyond criticism. It was the ultimate thing, the *summum bonum* of histrionic art. Those first-nighters who were fortunate enough to witness it de-

clare that it stirred them in a way eclipsing all previous experiences. A subtle magnetism overpowered them; they were caught up and away, as it were, into the unseen essence of things; gifted with a new power of penetration; made instinct with the very soul of Shakespeare himself. There was no applause, no call before the curtain; all was dead, breathless silence—the silence of hearts loosened away from earth, sensing the spiritual alone. After the performance there was no excitement; the audience left noiselessly: they were staggered, electrified, stunned.

Then, to the surprise of the whole world, the next morning's papers announced that the play was to be discontinued at once, and that Edmond Wynstay had set out for Thibet, having severed his connection with the stage for ever.

It was very strange.

Edmond Wynstay had certainly inherited his genius from his father; perhaps, too, something of that personal beauty which characterised him; yet those who had known his mother—a frail little woman, whose death had been the penalty of his birth—used to say the beauty chiefly came from her. However this may be, her early decease left a vivid impression upon both father and son; for not only did it cement closer their strong natural affinities, but also it imbued them with a deep sense of the continued spiritual presence of their loved one in their lives. The elder Wynstay, lacking the wisdom of this world, had not suffered so phantom a circumstance as death to destroy his faith in the eternity of love; and had consequently remained single, not seeing the necessity of-finding a mother for his child.

The result was that young Edmond grew up with so deep a reverence for the ideal, and so real an apprehension of spirit, he even failed the sowing of his wild oats, learning to "know life" pretty fairly without wallowing in its cesspools, and to perfect his own nature without desecrating others, circumstances that no doubt accounted somewhat for his fine physique and unclouded serenity of genius.

Edmond's father had not been fitted by nature to survive in the commercial struggle for existence—necessarily, having ideals; and losing, by the death of his wife, the stimulus his retiring disposition needed for even rightful self-assertion, he drifted slowly but surely into that vortex of poverty which the delirium of our social system so often prepares for real nobility Consequently when his son and worth. was only fifteen years of age the man died of a broken but unembittered heart, poorer than ever, yet still buoyantly confident of the ideal. The greatest dreamers are ever so; and therein lies the pityand the dignity-of life.

Edmond thus thrown upon his own resources, found himself suddenly plunged into a battle wherein the individual fought against great odds; but the memory of his father, combined with the splendid dauntlessness of youth, nerved him to make a brave struggle for his life. It had always been the dead man's ambition that his son should follow his own beloved profession -" the profession" as he proudly called it,—that had proved so ill a mistress to himself; and, indeed, the boy's abilities showed early promise in this direction; for he had that quick verve, that swift intuitive gift of "discerning spirits," which laid hold of the central fact of each human heart he came in contact with, and realised it dramatically within himself. opportunity is not always proportionate to capacity; and when Edmond Wynstay, aged sixteen, sought worship in the temple of Thespis, it was as a very humble acolyte indeed he found function at her shrine. In other words, he became callboy at a suburban theatre, there not being room in English art for such a monstrum horrendum as genius, when so many pretty ladies of a notoriety other

than artistic, and so many rich, young, merchants' sons, desired to place their charms before a waiting world.

In this lowly office, and in others of a similar character, Edmond Wynstay might have remained for ever, except for a fortunate accident. A small part one night becoming vacant through the sudden illness of an actor, and the ordinary understudy suffering from a like mischance, Edmond, on the spur of the moment, volunteered to take it. It was given him dubiously, in default of a more likely person being available. He fulfilled it to such perfection that the public applauded heartily, and his manager gave him a permanent engagement. From that time his art career was assured. Passing quickly from part to part, and rising rapidly in the estimation of the public, he soon became prominent enough to be decried of critics, and regarded jealously by his dressingroom companions.

A short time after, backed by the money of a speculative Jew, he scored his first great triumph as *Iago*; from which period the critics settled down with a sigh to the acknowledgment of his genius, and his dressing-room companions said "Told you so."

"Deah, deah!" remarked the rich, young, merchants' sons aforementioned. "Howevah did the beggah get his brains? Guttah-boy, nevah went to college, dry bread and all that, don't ye know! Awf'ly clevah chap!" They did not know that genius, like the Kingdom of Heaven, is "within" one, together with good-breeding and other estimable matters; and that even an heredity of tallow cannot always supply that inward necessity from without.

Edmond Wynstay's success did not turn his head. Looking wisely into life, he saw secrets there, beside which the hollow plaudits, the gorgeous glamour, and temptation of society seemed very sorry bait indeed. He who sees the sun is not much dazzled by an electric glare. Throughout all, his sense of the spiritual,

and the affectionate memory of his father, persisted, deepening day by day. Often and often, in the midst of some splendid passion of portrayal, in that consummate moment of creation when the artist drains the glory of skies into his soul, and feels and knows the Divine taking flesh within him, Edmond would think: "Ah, if only my father were with me now, to sympathise with me, to know pulse by pulse with me, this rushing, burning rapture of creation, this madness of prophetic fire!"

Perhaps, in the heart of such prayers as these, our loved ones, living fuller, freer lives than we yet dream of, hover nearer than we think.

At last the triumphs of Edmond Wynstay reached their height, and he prepared himself to fulfil the greatest rôle of all histrionic art, and place, in Hamlet, the crowning jewel upon the breastplate of his fame.

He entered upon his task with an enthusiasm greater than ever he had experienced before. The passionate pathos of the character, its audacity, the wild young heart beating with hot blood, the imagination that scaled high Heaven, and scoured the abysses of deep Hell, the long-drawn agony of deep questioning, the poor, pitiful human cry to the Unknown that seemed so far off, yonder in the darkness: all found in turn an echo in the recesses of his own young life, all found voice through him. Above all, he felt the ghostly influence of the play; for he, too, like Hamlet, had a father, out there, in the mysterious shadow-land beyond; he, too, felt the tragic necessity for an answer to the great questions whereof life is so sadly made up; he, too, demanded from the Heart of things some sign, some little word, to prove the eternal reality of our highest dreams, to deny that we are bound up solely with a fruitless whirl of atoms, or the everlasting jugglery of devils; he, too, cried, with the strange bitterness of the prophet, who feels the terrible necessity for reform, yet knows the tremendous odds against which his soul must fight. Oh, for some sign, some sign; some ghostly proof, beyond all power of doubt, whereby the prophet might loosen the lips of thunder, and waken the world, undaunted!

The rehearsals were long and many: Edmond Wynstay and his comrades were wrought to a high state of feverish excitement; the public, hearing hints of the delight in store, caught the contagion; everyone was on tiptoe with expectancy. At last, the great night came.

The house was crowded: every seat had been booked for weeks. All the leading representatives of art and literature were present, breathless with interest and anticipation. The play began.

A strange solemnity shivered through the house, as the curtain arose on the first scene, and the audience sank into a dead silence. The parts were played to perfection, the drilling of the last few months, under so inspiring a master as Wynstay, not having been without good fruit. Perhaps the ghost was a little mechanical, and in one place he forgot a cue; but this, together with a slight "fluffiness" of the limes—always excusable on a first night—comprised the only noticeable defects.

The appearance of Edmond Wynstay in the second scene was electrical. His very presence brought home the tragic significance of the play, and held the audience fascinated. The intense absorption of Hamlet's sorrow, set off so strikingly by the brilliant background of the jocund court; the quick alternations of passions—grief, irony, the dignity of icy separation from callous joy, the half-concealed contempt for the usurper king, culminating in the bitter outburst:

"O God! O God! How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable Seem to me all the uses of this world!"

the after-change of kindly greeting toward Horatio; finally, the quickened super-



A violent agitation seized the ghost.

natural suggestions, on hearing of his father's spirit, that only too readily responded to the anxious yearnings of his heart; each passed into perfect expression, and made Wynstay's *Hamlet* a living thing.

The audience had forgotten everything but the story before them. Critics, artists, idle men and women of fashion, humdrum work-a-day people of every kind, all their foolish differences dissolving, became one in the bonds of sympathy, one in the brotherhood of art. Their rapt attention being concentrated on Edmond Wynstay, his soul caught the fire of their magnetism; and to the fund of his own special powers was added that hypnotism of the audience so well-known to psychology, wherein player and spectator unite in the process of creation. Behind the scenes it was just the same: managers, prompter, carpenters, shifters, gasmen, all were intent on the play, lost in wonder.

Perhaps it was this latter fact that occasioned the two or three hitches in the fourth scene. The men at the limes seemed a little dazed, and the "fluffiness" which had occurred slightly before, became in this scene more decidedly pronounced. This was most conspicuous on the appearance of the ghost; for, instead of the green limes shining full upon him, they wobbled incontinently out. The circumstance evidently disconcerted the ghost; for, instead of making the movements assigned to him at rehearsal, he wandered vaguely about, as though half-stupefied. The fact, however, was hardly noticed by the audience, whose attention was being riveted by the magnificent playing of the principal character.

It was certainly the climax of Edmond Wynstay's powers. The critics to this day agree that the speech wherein Hamlet first addresses the ghost—"Angels and ministers of grace defend us,"—as delivered by him, was utterly beyond parallel in dramatic art. He poured out into it all the passion, all the love, all

the long spiritual questionings of his youth. It was his own father in the other world, he cried upon; his own troubled chaos of tumultuous thought, he strove to give shape to: he himself was Hamlet, and Hamlet, he.

At the end of this speech a violent agitation seized the ghost; his whole frame quivered as with an ague, his eyes started aghast and ogled horribly, the face writhed convulsively into another semblance; at the same time a supernatural mist wrapped around him, and——

The people shivered with an unknown horror; icy chills like the cold, clammy fingers of death seemed to touch them; afterwards they said the stage-craft was supreme; but Edmond Wynstay knew he looked upon none other than his own dead father.

The rest of the play went on without a hitch. There was no need for the limes; the ghost brought its own light. A deathly silence reigned throughout the theatre. All were bewildered, paralysed, dumb; but those who were present that night declare they shall never forget the dreadful realism of that awful shape, and the wind-like whisper of its voice. It froze them to the bones; it shivered to their inmost souls, till they became spectral, too—cold, cold, ice-cold, swept by silent winds, bare with unutterable nakedness.

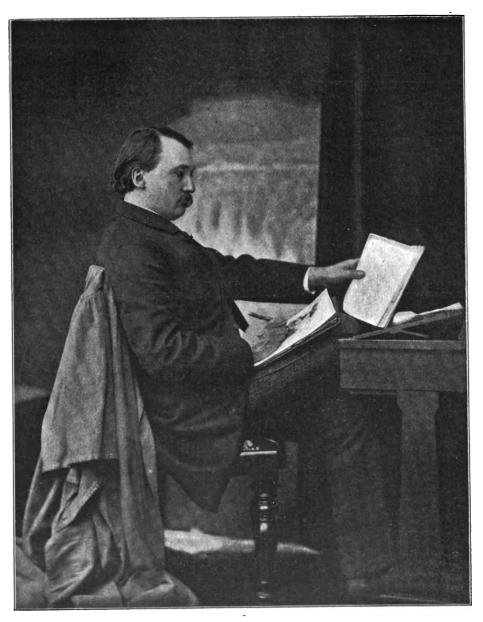
The world never wholly learned the meaning of the mystery; for Edmond Wynstay bound his staff and company to silence; but, a few days ago, the writer of this story met an old actor, who, on enquiry, turned out to be the very man engaged by Wynstay to play the ghost. He detailed the whole circumstances of "Sir," said he solemnly, in the story. conclusion, "the meaning I do not propose to unravel—that is beyond me; but throughout the rehearsals of that play I always felt an uncanny influence upon me, as though I were not complete master of myself. My every movement seemed to be modified by some force outside me

urging me to gestures other than those laid down. My lips and tongue, whilst they worked freely, were not wholly responsive to my will; they appeared to be controlled from without. This influence—spiritual, magnetic, demoniac, call it what you will—came to a climax on the night of the show, when I felt impelled to yield to it altogether. At the moment of the spirit's materialisation I lost all consciousness; and, believe me, sir," he continued

impressively, "at precisely that point of time an unaccountable event occurred at my diggings, six miles away. My land-lady—as good and wide-awake a soul as ever lived—hearing from the direction of my bedroom a tremendous noise like the precipitation of a heavy body to the ground, rushed upstairs to learn what was the matter. Judge of her dismay and surprise, when she found me there, clad in my ghost robes, in a dead faint on the floor."



yn de lives il fant illuster pour i illustered poi mi me - Son



mu:; nos de main som sympathic

Edory'

Portrait of Gustav Doré, privately taken, with Autograph.

DORÉ IN ENGLAND.

BY HAROLD G. DANIELS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH A DRAWING, A PORTRAIT, AND AN AUTOGRAPH LETTER,
ALL HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED.

N the face of oppression, impediment, scorn or ridicule, genius, like murder, will out, as the history of the world's great men has proved over and over again; perhaps because an integral part in the economy of genius is the power to make itself heard amid the din of the world's war and high above the self-praising clamour of mediocrity. Of this fact, the work and success of Gustav Doré must ever stand as a striking instance, because, while he gave evidence of remarkable ability at an unusually early age, those responsible for his education were unceasingly concerned in thwarting a natural bent so strongly marked as to leave no room for doubt. The child, father to the artist, showed budding genius, and the talent for depicting the scenes and objects that crowd the environment and imagination of a child waxed rather than waned under the restraint designed to stifle it. The infant Doré was never so happy as when, pencil in hand, he was decorating with precocious skill door-panels, walls, and even the floor, when a more suitable medium failed him. When a school-boy his taste for drawing was regarded by his father and schoolmaster as an evidence of his intractability; the former, intending his son to follow the profession of engineering, at one period took away his pencils and forbade all further drawings -with the consequence that the boy's health suffered, to return only when the parental licence to indulge in his favourite pastime was renewed.

Of course an art-school training was out of the question, nor does the younger Doré appear to have desired it otherwise. To this extent the circumstance was, perhaps, advantageous, that thus he remained all his life free from the cramping influence of cult, scholasticism, and the evils of an enforced and servile imi-He was Doré-of no school, following no creed, and standing alone; ready to commit every heresy that the art-world knew, if thereby he might fur-Though the intention of his ther art. father was to hamper his progress by refusing him an "art education," it was, perhaps, due to this that he escaped from the confinement of methods that are often accused of warping genius while manufacturing inferior craftsmen.

But if Doré shunned the art-schools and their methods, his own personal training was not neglected. In his case, since he knew what was best for himself, it was, doubtless, more effective. keynote to his system of self-tuition was memory, which he sought to cultivate by taxing it to lengths that must appear almost superhuman to the untrained mind. Close observation lay at the root of its From the broadest general scheme down to the minutest detail, Doré accustomed himself to notice, and to impress the result of his observation upon his memory. The secret of a picturememory must always be a sense of place, and this sense he had cultivated to a most marvellous degree; testing its retentive powers from time to time by the performance of feats that called up the admiration of his friends and the wonder of all who witnessed them. On

one occasion Doré submitted his memory to what I may call "ordeal by the camera." A friend photographed a portion of a cathedral that he happened to visit in company of the artist, who meanwhile stood still and noticed it. On their return the photographer developed his plate, and Doré sat down to draw from memory what he had seen. comparison showed very little to choose between the two pictures in point of relevant detail!

It was a tour de force and was done with a purpose; for Doré was not always so felicitous in remembering. Occasionally when, trusting implicitly in his mental notes, would scorn even the rough sketches he was wont to make, he fell into some egregious blunders, such as representing London Bridge with a series of Norman arches! This, unlike other mistakes

of a similar nature, but having as their cause carelessness or hurry, was simply an error due to imperfect observation. Thus, a moment's reflection would have spared him the gibes that Ponswill a

Cler ami

J'ai laise' hier partit me

lettre sans vous parler

d'un oubli qui depuis

mon retour est une

cause projetuelle de

Tourment pour moi

nous avons font

mous avons stationne
nous avons stationne
une demi heur dans
la maison du diviniment
of nous roumes partet
sous laistes notre carte

que feuri? que fairi? mer
cher anii consullez mor
de grace, or ni nous toury
une volution, vil cring
moi car j'en suis toury
au deli de toute uper, and
lumeine. que feure?

Portions of Dore's autograph letter referring to the visit to Stratford-on-Avon.

greeted him when (illustrating the reign of King Arthur) he decorated the walls of Almesbury with the escutcheon of the House of Hanover. But such anachronisms are common in the pictures of some of the world's greatest painters, while the school of Munich thinks no harm in painting the peasantry of Judæa garbed in the modern Bavarian Volkstracht.

As a satirist—a hard grim satirist rather than the interpreter of humour —Doré became famous before he reached his twentieth year, his work finding eager acceptance and commanding liberal remuneration. His early sketches found their first publisher M. Philippon, who enlisted him into the ranks of the staff of his Journal pour Rire, and who guaranteed him an income of at least five thousand francs for his first year's work.

Parental objections had of necessity to cease, and henceforward Doré was free to do the work he loved. He was prolific in production as in ideas, notwithstanding his painstaking exactness and his un-

hesitating destruction of all work that did not satisfy his fastidious taste. He obeyed his own canons of what a drawing should be, nor did the "infinite capacity" form a negligeable part of his genius. He disliked nothing so much as the epithet "facile" frequently bestowed upon him, yet totally undeserved.

It is frequently my privilege and pleasure to dine with an eminent Anglican divine—himself an artist of no mean capabilities—who was Doré's guide, philosopher, and friend during the painter's visit to England; indeed it was in a great measure due to their intimate friendship that Doré was enabled to make such a thorough and comprehensive study of English national life, as well in the houses of polished society as among the poor and outcast upon the highway and slum. Doré's friend he introduced him everywhere; as his philosopher he initiated him into the mysteries of English social etiquette and custom; as his guide he conducted him on pilgrimages to the various places of interest that are the literary landmarks of the country.

The circumstances which led to Doré's penning the amusing missive herewith reproduced have bearing upon his companion's kindness in all three capacities. The two friends, while the guests of the Countess of Warwick (now the Dowager Lady Warwick) had driven over together to Stratford-on-Avon from Warwick Castle. During the drive the friend (assuming the role of philosopher) had beguiled the moments of the journey with an exhaustive discourse upon the manner and usages of leaving cards when visiting, as observed in England among polite people. Of these instructions Doré took careful note, asking questions from time to time or making comparison with the customs of France. But on arrival at Stratfordon-Avon the interest he took in Shakespeare's birthplace, its surroundings and associations, added to the discourse of his (now) guide, usurped his mind and filled his head with other matters; nor did he recall the circumstance of the lecture until he had returned to Paris, when he wrote the following playful letter:—

"DEAR FRIEND,-

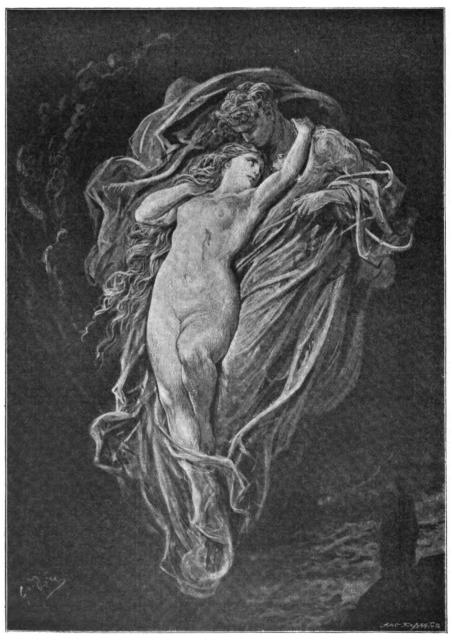
"Yesterday I sent away my letter without speaking of one thing, which, since my return, I had forgotten. It is a perpetual source of torment to me, and I cannot conceive that I could have been so forgetful as to have written four pages to you without speaking of the principal subject of my thought. I shall be very sorry if I am the cause of making you share my trouble, because you have already enough of your own; but it is more loyal for me to tell you frankly of this sad matter. Perhaps you can see a way to repair this fatal error; but if you cannot manage it I shall be at least convinced that you have exhausted all possible means to save my selfrespect and my character from this sad fix. Here is the thing quite openly: judge and see for yourself if it is possible to make a reparation. You remember, without doubt, that we paid a visit together to Stratford-on-Avon, when we stayed half-an-hour in the house of the Divine Master, and we departed without leaving our card! What to do? What to do? Advise me, for mercy's sake, and if you find a way out write to me quickly, for I am troubled about it beyond all human expression. What to do? What to do?

"Yours,

"G. Doré.

"Friday, 18th August, 1878."

Doré the satirist, Doré the illustrator, Doré the painter, Doré the bon garçon! Story and anecdote, picture and prank, each bring out a side of the complex character, and illustrate it in a different "How many books one must light. illustrate to illustrate oneself!" he himself wrote above his portrait, conscious, no doubt, of what was in him and how much more was yet to be shown before the world might say, "This is Doré." Not the Bible nor Shakespeare did he deem enough to exhaust his many-sided personality. He saw himself in the solemn grandeur that adorned the Muse of Milton; in that abandon of mediæval romanticism which fascinated the genius of Rabelais; in the fables of La Fontaine; in the humours of Balzac's Contes



"Dans l'Eternité." Doré's original drawing for Francesca. (Dante's Inferno, Canto V.)
Never before published.

(By special permission of the Rev. Canon Harford.)

Drolatiques, in Tennyson's poems, in the extravagances of Cervantes, and in others of a list too long to specify. In each he revealed a new part of the composite man, yet still felt the revelation to be incomplete. Not even by following in Dante's footsteps to the depths of the Inferno was he able to find the limits of his art, whose length only the brevity of the artist's life could determine.

Of the whole Divine Comedy perhaps no single story moved him to such an extent, nor struck such a clear note upon his vivid imagination, as did the pathetic tale of Paolo and Francesca da Rimini. The hopeless grief of condemned souls was never told upon canvas with such deep emotion, such real sympathy before the unalterable decree of spoken doom, solaced by the sweetness of the sin. Dante rose to sublime heights and peered into strange depths, whither he has been followed by numbers seeking to interpret his meaning with brush and pencil. in this story, at least, it may be questioned whether one of them realised the poet's conceptions with a tithe of Doré's success and felicity.

The accompanying reproduction is one of two drawings executed by Doré in the early part of 1862. Its companion represents the sin which sent Francesca to hell. These drawings were prior to the publication of the illustrated Inferno, and to the great picture of Paolo and Francesca that has become so widely known. In presenting these two pictures to his friend in 1872, Doré wrote as follows:—

"Vendredi, 21, Janvier.

"Vous avez dû vous etonner en effet, mon cher ami, de n'avoir pas encore reçu les deux petites esquisses a vous destinées. . . . Ces deux petits dessins representent l'un, cette Francesca que vous m'avez toujours dit aimer, et l'autre, la scène du pèché que l'a envoyé aux

enfers. Cela peut dont s'appèler 'sur la terre,' et 'dans l'Eternité.' Ces deux croquis sont les premiers que j'ai fait sur ces sujets en 1862, quand j'elaborais l'illustration de la divine comédie; ils ont donc tous deux précédé le livre et le tableau.
. . . Ton fidèle, G. Doré."

These drawings were originally given by Doré to his mother, in whose bedroom they hung until her death, when the artist gave them to his "guide, philosopher, and friend," in whose possession they remain. The one is now published for the first time, the other has never been reproduced. They may be considered as examples of Doré's work at the zenith of his powers; and in spite of their small size—both are only sixteen inches by twelve—may be assigned high rank among his greatest work.

"How many books one must illustrate to illustrate oneself!" Notwithstanding the thoroughness and diversity of his illustrations for the classic books, he seems to have felt that his true métier lay in painting. Already, even before "Francesca," he had painted many pictures, and had learnt to love painting for its own sake before his plates and drawings lost their power to charm him. But, excepting illustrations, the Bible was as yet an untouched field to him; and there were passages in the Bible that lent themselves especially to his brush. With this great fund of inspiration at hand, he began to turn his attention towards illustrating himself in something that afforded a wider scope to a single glance. his "guide, philosopher, and friend" was at hand with kindly suggestion, the result of which was the great canvas, the "Prætorium," first mooted, I believe, in Sir George Grove's garden at Sydenham. There was forged the first link in a chain of masterpieces that culminated in the "Vale of Tears" and the sad cadences of the funeral service at St. Clothilde.



[&]quot;How did you like the ride on Uncle Harry's knee?"
"Oh, it was nice enough, but I had a ride on a real donkey yesterday."



DARE say I should have continued to question my companion as to the Countess Lizooshka, a subject which appeared distasteful to him, but which had, nevertheless, aroused my curiosity, but our conversation was here interrupted by the commencement of the entertainment of the Grand Duke, than which I have never witnessed anything more grotesquely ridiculous and flippant.

The marionettes were shown by the Prince himself, and the performance represented the trial and execution of a rat which was accused and convicted of eating the clothes of one of the dolls. The rat was duly hung, after a silly marionette trial. It made one feel very sad to see a great Prince content to amuse himself in this way, and not ashamed to ask others, his inferiors, to witness his foolishness.

This Grand Duke, Peter, was one upon whom Nature had lavished her gifts of position and inherited greatness without according to him the necessary capacity to realise them, or the genius to make of them a splendid destiny. He might

have occupied any one of three great positions, being heir at once to the Duchy of Holstein, the Kingdom of Sweden, and the Empire of Russia; and had he been allowed his choice in the matter, he would have been content with the least of these—the Holstein Duchy—as likely to entail the less trouble to himself. But Russia had need of an heir of the blood of her revered Peter I., and though Sweden bid high for the Prince, Elizabeth of Russia outbade the Swedes. And, after all this, here was this Prince of the blood of Peter the Great holding mock trials of rats, with dolls for judges, and a whole roomful of tin and wooden soldiers which he was content to drill for Bah! it made one sad to see it, though—had I but known it—I was to see many sadder things before all was said and done with this wretched specimen of triple royalty. Bah! . . and the master, this, of Douglas!

Afterwards we played with the cards, for money. The stakes were far higher than I liked or could afford, and I would have excused myself from playing, but the Grand Duke would have me in the game, the other players being himself, Countess Lizooshka Vorontsova, Douglas, Lyef Narishkin and his wife, and perhaps another.

The Grand Duke cheated in the most

^{*} Copyright, 1898, by Fred Whishaw, in the United States of America.

barefaced manner; if he did not happen to hold cards which suited him, he deliberately chose others, looking through the pack until he found them. It was easy for him to win the stakes in this way, and win he did, laughing and pocketing the money with a joke addressed to Lizooshka, which I did not catch.

My purse was empty after two rounds of this, so that I refused to take a hand at the third deal.

"Why not, Elschen?" said the Prince.

"You have won all my money, Highness!" I replied, blushing.

"Will not your friend advance you a little?" he continued, nodding his head at Douglas.

"Certainly, Highness!" laughed the Count; but I was not going to accept of a loan from Douglas in order that the Prince might instantly cheat me of this also.

"Lend it to me yourself, Highness!" I said very impudently, but I was angry with the Imperial card-sharper; "you will soon see your money home again!" All the company laughed at this sally.

"Oh, you may win yet!" he said.

"Not unless you play with your own cards," I replied.

The Prince put out his tongue with one of his favourite grimaces; then he laughed and handed me fifty roubles.

"It is but a game, Elschen," he said; "to-day I win, to morrow you—you may cheat when I am not looking."

Nevertheless, I learned afterwards that the Prince was not pleased if any player imitated his own methods and helped himself to a desired card. Therefore I preferred in future to make excuses before the game began, whenever the Grand Duke favoured me with an invitation to his card-parties.

After this game I hoped we were to be allowed to depart, but the Prince, having dismissed the rest, detained myself and Douglas. "I have a treat for thee, Elsa," he said "have you seen my aunt the Empress? No? I thought not, she is never too anxious to receive the new arrivals; you shall see her to-night."

"Oh! no, Highness! please!" I said.
"I am not prepared—my toilette——"

"Your toilette is charming," he interrupted. "But fear nothing; she shall not see you, though you shall see her—there! It is a treat which I reserve for my particular friends, of whom von Doppelheim, here, is one, and you are his ward; therefore you shall see the Empress in déshabillé. You will never reveal it?"

"Oh, never!" I said, wondering what in the world all this foolish talk signified.

"Then come—you also, Douglas," said the Prince, leading the way. Down a corridor we went, and into a small room which, apparently, our guide used for manœuvring his troops of tin soldiers, for the floor was littered with squares and other formations of these warriors, amongst which he signed to us to step carefully.

"Neither speak nor cough nor make any sound," he whispered, "but softly remove the curtain against the wall, and place your eye to the peephole. Ladies first—you take the first look, Elschen, and see what you can see."

I glanced at Douglas, who nodded. Then I moved aside the curtain and found a small hole drilled in the wall, which, like all the rest of the house was of wood.

The spectacle I beheld was a strange one, and even more unpleasant than strange, especially when one realised who were the actors concerned, which at first I did not.

An elderly woman, stout and large and florid, lay back in a great chair at the head of a table well laden with food and drink, served upon dishes of gold and finest crystal; she held a goblet of wine and listened to the whispering of an officer, a man of about her own age grey-haired and handsome; as he finished his whispered remark she roared with laughter, as did the man himself, both voices suggesting the noisy mirth of the pot-house. They had been drinking heavily, there was no doubt of it. One or two attendants were by, but no guests:

it was a party of two, and two intimates, as was evidenced by their costumes. which were extremely negligé, the lady wearing a mere dressinggown, while the man had doffed his tunic and sat in his shirt and trousers with his sword awry and his wig equally SO.

I turned from the tableau in disgust, resigning my place to Douglas, who glanced at it but for a moment, and, with an angry look at the Prince, strode awaytowards the door, dragging me with him.

The Prince himself took a hasty peep at

the scene, and then followed us, laughing and grimacing and shrugging his shoulders.

"That is my dear aunt," he said, "who loves to scold me for my intemperate habits; she is tipsy, as you see; and she was tipsy yesterday, and will be tipsy to-morrow. What of it? We must all live, and really to live we must be happy;

and to be happy we must certainly drink wine. Nevertheless, I love my aunt, for she has a good heart,"

"You show your love in a peculiar manner, Highness," said Douglas angrily. "I should humbly counsel you to stop up that hole, and never again to bring your

> aunt, who is also your Empress, into dishonour by prying into her secret affairs."

"Oh, but you are my particular friends," he said, "and have promised to say nothing of what you have seen. Besides, everyone is aware that the Empress takes wine; and all the world knows also that she dearly loves Razoomofsky."

"Silence, Highness!" said Douglas, actually stamping his foot.

The Prince looked up in surprise in the Count's face.

"Holy Mother," he said, "what is it now?

Oh!" he continued, glancing at me—" the little Fraulein! well—if she comes here she must soon know all about Razoomofsky and—and a few other things!" he ended with a laugh. "This is the Palace of Truth, Fraulein; we do not hide our light under a bushel in this Court!"

Douglas made a hasty salute, and said "it was time the Fraulein departed," and



I moved a curtain aside.

with the words he dragged me from the room. During our short walk to the apartments of the Grand Duchess he scarcely spoke; but on bidding me good-night he said, very seriously, that he began to fear my service with the Grand Duchess must end before ever I had seen my mistress.

"Why?" I asked, surprised.

"I fear it was a foolish thing to bring you here, my Elsa," he said gravely. "My" Elsa! How the pronoun sent the hot blood to my face and a flood of joy to my heart!

"Oh, do not say that, Count Douglas!" I said; "you would not have me return to narrow little Zerbst?"

"I did not understand how — well, how bad things were when I advised your parents to let you come. It is no fit place for a young and innocent girl."

"I am not afraid," I said; "God will protect the innocent. Knowledge of evil cannot injure me; I am not afraid of knowledge; I cannot remain a child for ever."

"Nevertheless, I am afraid for your welfare here," he said, "and moreover my own position displeases and shames me. To serve a clown-prince can bring no honour to a man; my master is a fool and worse. I wish I had never come to this place, and a hundred times more I wish you had not."

"Let us wait awhile and see whether we cannot find our duty even here," I said. "For all we know, the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess may yet have great need of us. Only think, for your own part, what superb use this ill-brought up Prince might make, if he would, of your honest counsel and influence and example for good—surrounded as he is by a host of sycophants and boon companions; and with, perhaps, not one single honest friend about him save yourself."

"Ah, if he would!" said Douglas; "but he will not. Nevertheless, I shall stay on, Elsa, having undertaken the duty. As for you, I know not what to advise."

"I will stay also!" I said. "When I grow afraid, I will tell you."

"Well—we will wait awhile and see what comes; and now good-night, Elsa, and may God protect the innocent."

Douglas raised my hand to his lips and departed.

As for me, I retired to the squalid apartment apportioned to the accommodation of the Ladies of the Grand Duchess—a dirty, ill-kept room in which four of us slept together—for though the reception rooms of this Palace of St. Petersburg were most magnificent, large, and numerous, and gorgeously decorated and furnished, yet little attention was paid to the sleeping apartments of the household, and many of the servants, and even the gentlemen-in-waiting, slept where they could, under tables and upon sofas and behind screens in anterooms and even in reception chambers.

I lay and thought over my experiences of the evening, and of my first introduction to the Imperial Family; and I wondered what destiny could have been thinking about when it gave to this Peter, the clownish prince, the most sumptuous heritage that mortal man could imagine; while for Douglas—beautiful and noble and heroic—it had nothing more magnificent than a situation as servant to this other, who was not worthy to burnish the metal of his sword-scabbard.

But Douglas had called me "my Elsa," and that delightful consideration soon banished every less important thought from my brain, and set me a-musing and afterwards a-dreaming of all manner of charming and lovely things, to the utter exclusion of such unpleasant subjects as tipsy, dissolute Empresses, with good hear:s; and tipsy, dissolute, unutterably silly Grand Dukes, with equally good hearts, but unsupplied with even the apology for a headpiece.

CHAPTER VI.

It so happened that my introduction to the Grand Duchess, my mistress, followed close upon my first acquaintance with her husband, the Tsarevitch.

I was engaged, I think, in mending my stockings in the little anteroom allotted to us, thinking over the strange events of the preceding evening, when Olga Narishkin came quickly up to me.

"Make haste and get ready," she said, "the Grand Duchess has asked for you."

I sprang to my feet, delighted. I had found it somewhat discouraging to have been left so long after my arrival in absolute neglect.

"Put on your prettiest frock," said Olga, "and look your freshest and neatest; the Grand Duchess is soon charmed by a pretty face and a tidy toilette, and the first impression should be favourable; that is very important. Be as quick as you can—I will wait and introduce you."

I dressed myself carefully—alas! how ridiculously young I looked as I critically examined my reflection in the mirror! Would I never carry the appearance of a decent age? Must I for ever be a child, and treated as one?

The Grand Duchess was seated reading; I observed the book: it was Montesquieu's L'Esprit des Lois, which work she has often described as her "breviary."

I was fascinated immediately by the appearance of this great Princess, now seen by me for the first time since infancy.

Her skin was marvellously white, her hair nearly black; her mouth not very small nor yet very large, but with mobile and attractive lips; a nose beautifully chiselled, of the Grecian type. In figure she was of medium stature, inclining rather to height than to shortness; she was slim and active-looking at this time, though in after years she changed greatly in this respect, becoming more than inclined to embonpoint. Her movements were full of dignity and her bearing of nobility. Her smile was very fascinating

and her voice most pleasing. She looked up from her book as I approached shyly, I suppose, and timidly, and smiled reassuringly:

"Come, little one," she said, "and let me look well at thee!" The Princess spoke German; I felt at ease with her immediately. I smiled back and came a few steps nearer. Catherine took my hand and drew me towards her.

"You may retire, Narishkin," she said, and Olga bowed and disappeared.

"Now," she continued, "little one; sit on the stool here and speak—tell me about Zerbst and your life there. Lord! it is good to look upon a thing so young and innocent and—yes, pretty; you are certainly pretty!"

"I had rather you found me faithful, Highness!" I said, awkwardly enough.

"You droll child!" she laughed; "that will come; I shall find your faithfulness when opportunity reveals it; but beauty reveals itself at sight—come, tell me, have not the men let you know that you are pretty? If I remember the Zerbster fellows aright, I warrant they have been very eloquent long since?" I laughed and blushed.

"Oh, they are always the same at Zerbst!" I said; "they are given to speaking much foolishness."

"And your own heart, little one; has it held out against this foolishness?"

"Oh yes—" I began, and then suddenly remembered; "at least——" I stammered, and stopped.

"Ah, it is so, my little mädchen," said the Princess, smiling, and patting my cheek; "well, well—forget him, if he is in Zerbst; it is ill for women to cry for the unattainable, like dogs that howl for the moon."

"Oh, I cannot!" I blurted; "I shall never forget him."

"So? And his heart, is it yours?"

"He has not said so, Highness!" I said, blushing.

"But he has looked so; is that it?" she

laughed. I remained silent, uncertain whether I should reveal the fact that my Douglas was not in Zerbst but in this very palace, in the Grand Duke's "half."

"And is he as young as thou?" continued the Princess.

"Oh no, Highness; he is much older—twenty, nearly."

"Ah, that is a great age; and handsome?"

"Like a god!" I said stoutly. The Grand Duchess laughed very merrily and again tapped my face. Then she bent and kissed me.

"Like a god, is he?" she cried; "hold fast to him then, my innocent, for there are very few men who are like gods in this naughty world. You shall tell me more of this another day; I will only say now that love is very important and absorbing in this life, but must not be made the most important of all things. is Career, and that you shall have, if you deserve it of me, from my hands; then comes Love, in which a woman cannot afford to fail, lest it become too absorbing. In the matter of love each woman must work out her own destiny and see that she attain her heart's desire, even at a sacrifice. Do you follow me, little one?"

"No, Highness, I do not!" I said, with perfect truth. As a matter of fact I had no idea of her meaning.

"Well, well—that is because you are very young and, as I see plainly, very ignorant of the world; but one day you will understand. Nevertheless, I will say this, that blessed are the innocent; it is better to preserve the innocence of life; good is better than evil. But remember that Career comes first of all. You spoke of faithfulness; do you mean to serve me through and through and in spite of everything?"

"I sincerely intend to do my best!" I

"But in spite of everything?"

"I will be content to do all that a great Princess can expect of a servant," I said. "But there will be trials to your faithfulness," continued Catherine," such as you dream not of. This is no quiet, uneventful German Court; here you shall find the unexpected at every turn; you shall see many things which are sure to shock every opinion which you have held heretofore. Dare you face such a career as this?"

"Whoever fears knowledge is unworthy of knowledge," I said; "I am not afraid to know the world."

"My poor child," said the Grand Duchess, "the world is much more wicked than you suppose."

"I will shut my eyes to its wickedness. Must I be wicked because I know of the wickedness of others?"

"God forbid; but will your love and loyalty—towards myself, I mean—survive the knowledge of evil?"

"Are you wicked, Highness?" I asked. The Grand Duchess sighed and then laughed aloud.

"Yes," she said; "many would say so, you among them,—very wicked; yet I act upon principle: the principle I have already enunciated, that career is first, and that a forlorn love must not be allowed to trespass too freely upon the territory of politics, lest it become absorbing and mischievous. Have you seen the Tsarevitch, my husband?"

The sudden question surprised and staggered me; I blushed deeply and said nothing. The Grand Duchess laughed.

"I see," she said; "you are honest; I too will be honest. You thought the Prince a clown? You are right; I am mated with a fool for partner. Now I will go further and tell you a little more. After you have heard this, you may, if you please, turn your back upon my Court and me and return to Zerbst: I shall be neither displeased nor offended if you do so immediately; but observe: if you once decide—in spite of all things—to remain at this Court, your displeasure afterwards at anything you may see or



She looked up from her book as I approached.

hear, will come too late, and I will not let you go again. You will have become useful and perhaps indispensable to me as the depository of certain secrets: do you understand?"

"I quite understand, Highness," I said. I felt my knees quake beneath me: what was I about to learn?

"Very well, then; in the first place, could any woman, unless it be that most contemptible person Elizabeth Romanovna Vorontsova, whom he vastly prefers to myself—can any woman, I say, be expected to love such a man as this Prince?"

"They say that God has created for each man his own fitting mate," said I, remembering suddenly that I had heard this theory propounded somewhere.

The Princess laughed delightedly and kissed my cheek.

"A Solomon!" she said: "a Solomon indeed! It is good—well said, my preity one: it is most true: the Almighty then created Peter for Lizooshka and Lizooshka for Peter; they are a well-matched pair; but it is in my mind that the Grand Duke and I were not so created for one another, and—as a matter of fact—I hate the man."

"Oh!" I blurted, "how very, very sad!"

"Why, if this Vorontsova is his foreordained mate it is not sad. In the realm of politics, which come first, Providence provided this Peter as a ladder by which I, who am wiser than he, might climb to equal heights with him; in the realm of Love—well, there is this Lizooshka for this Peter."

"And your heart for ever desolate!" I ejaculated in my innocence.

"That does not follow," smiled the Princess. "Now listen: I hate this man, and he me, though he esteems my wisdom and comes to me for counsel at every turn. What the future may have in store for us I cannot yet foresee; but the Empress is growing old and lives a very

unhealthy life; the time must soon come when my husband shall reign in her place. Up to that moment and a little longer I shall be faithful, politically, to him; but if, after his accession, certain events come about as I intend they should, yourself and all my adherents contributing to that end, there will come a sudden rending of our political union, just as our hearts are utterly separated already."

"I understand," I murmured. "There will be two parties; your party and his."

"Just that," said Catherine; "and the winning side will be mine. If all go as I would have it to go, there will be a bloodless revolution. The Prince is not fit to wield the power; my child, little Paul, is an infant—what would you have? there is only I!"

My whole body was a tingle by this time, by reason of the blood that rushed through my veins. I was excited and intensely agitated. Here was a revelation indeed! Here was a weighty secret for a maiden of sixteen to be suddenly made mistress of! And here a career indeed, -a career of probable danger and adventure, and possible distinction and even glory, such as I had never even dreamed It was splendid! Why had the Princess reposed so much confidence in me, a total stranger, and a child besides? Well, God being my helper, I should never betray her trust. She had charmed and fascinated me. I never thought for a moment of the morality, or the reverse, of her avowed intentions and principles. I knelt and kissed her hands. I looked up in her face with, I suppose, the kind of devoted expression that one sees in the eyes of a dog, for Catherine kissed me, and laughed and said that there was no need to question my good faith, for my eyes already vowed eternal devotion to

"Oh, Highness, how you have trusted me!" I murmured, "and I so young and ignorant!" "Thank the Lord for that!" she laughed; "for, you see, I have thus first hold upon your heart and imagination. You are to be trusted, my pretty, and that is why you have been trusted by me thus fearlessly. So then you agree to serve me well and truly?"

"Oh, Princess, to the end of life!" I said intensely.

"And you will not turn your back upon me when evil is spoken of me?"

"Oh, never, never! I swear it!"

"Even—even if that which is spoken be the truth?"

"Oh, Highness," I said, "I will be faithful through all! you will see!"

"Good. Yes, I shall see. And meanwhile I fully trust you, little innocent, to speak to no one, not even to your own heart, of these things. Even were your dearest to insist, at the price of his love, upon sharing your secrets, deny him; tell him that the love which feeds upon broken faith is not worth the keeping—do you fully understand me? There is that in our secret which would cost many heads, perhaps your own and mine among the number. You will say that I risk too much in speaking to you of these things; but it is not so. Those who are on my side are well aware that they carry their lives, for the present, in their own hands. For the rest, I know whom to trust and whom to fear!"

The Grand Duchess now dismissed me, and I went from her presence full of happiness and of pleasurable excitement, for I felt that I might yet be destined to play a part in the theatre of life such as should surprise my own quiet folks at Zerbst, and perhaps fill them with envy and admiration.

It did not strike me until long after I had quitted the presence of the Grand Duchess that by accepting this trust from her Highness I had set up a barrier between Douglas and myself.

This thought somewhat damped the exaltation of spirit into which the kindness

of the Grand Duchess had lifted me, and I at first cherished the foolish idea of returning to beg that her Highness permit me to reconsider my promise of secrecy in so far as it concerned one person, whom —I intended to promise—I would bring over from the camp of the enemy to her own side. When Douglas knew the rights of this matter he would not hesitate to acknowledge that he had enlisted under the wrong standard.

God forgive me for thus, even for a moment, misjudging Douglas! Wrong standard or right, Douglas could never desert his colours, once he had enlisted to serve under them! I realised upon closer reflection that this must and should be so, and I am glad, indeed, that I did not stultify myself by approaching her Highness upon so foolish an errand, for I should have angered and disenchanted my benefactress, and that to no useful end; for she would never have permitted me to consult Douglas on such a point, and, if she had, Douglas might have scorned me, and rightly, for thinking so ill of him.

And, after all, I reflected—given that this struggle between the impossible Tsarevitch and his masterful wife must be, and granted, also, that Douglas had, by the perversity of his destiny, espoused the losing cause (for Catherine, I was persuaded from the first, must win in the end!)—it was just as well that I should be in the camp of the stronger party; for now I could at least watch and see that my Douglas came to no ill for his cause' sake. Lord! how simple it all seemed, at the beginning, to my ignorant mind; and how little I dreamed of all the heart-burning, and suffering, and despair that I was destined to go through before the end came.

Now for my introduction to he Empress, and then hey! for the life that moves and throbs and pulsates: a life that I knew nothing of until these coming days!

CHAPTER VII.

When I returned to the anteroom after my audience with the Grand Duchess, I found Olga Narishkin with others talking and working. Olga beckoned me to her and bade me disclose all I had to tell.

- "Oh, I adore her!" I said. "I would give my life for her to day!"
- "Oh—a case of love at first sight!" said Olga. "So she made herself agreeable, did she?"
 - "She is fascinating!" I exclaimed.
- "Agreed—when she likes. But, mark you, Elsa, she is not always the same. I warn you not to be disappointed if you find her less kind on another occasion. Her charm of manner varies with her moods. For three months she has been as cross as a bear!"
- "Fie, Olga; it is a shame to talk thus of a great princess, and your mistress!" I said.
- "I do not love her the less for her faults," laughed Olga, "nor would she have her friends blind to them. I never knew anyone less ashamed of faults than is her Highness. She speaks openly of them and is inclined to parade them, that all may see and know her as she is—her friends I mean; she will have no half friends, nor friends on false pretences. You will know her better in time."
- "I am content to wait," I said, "and moreover I shall always love her with all my heart, as I do now, whatever I may find in her afterwards."
- "That is quite right," said Olga; "you are a nice child, Elsa, and a pretty one. I have never seen you look so pretty as this morning. The Grand Duchess is like another woman to-day; for three months all has been gloom, but this day the sun shines and the birds sing!"
- "Why?" I asked; "is there a reason?"
- "Yes, there is a reason; a handsome, debonair reason, whose name is Poniatofsky."

- "And what of Poniatofsky?" I asked, understanding nothing.
- "A young Pole, who came from Saxony in the suite of Hanbury-Williams, the English envoy. Williams has gone, and Poniatofsky has gone also; but Williams will not return—which the Grand Duchess may survive; while Poniatofsky is even now expected, returning as the Polish ambassador! Hence the gaiety of the Grand Duchess and her fascinating kindness towards you; and none, I admit, need be more fascinating than Catherine, when she desires to please!"
- "But stay," I said; "why should the Princess take so much delight in the coming of a Polish ambassador; is the Polish alliance so important to her?"
- "Oh yes, this Polish alliance—very important indeed," Olga laughed.

I concluded that this Poniatofsky must be a political partisan of the Princess, whom she intended, somehow, to make useful in her anticipated duel with Peter for the power. I was pleased with my acumen in discerning this. I laughed.

- "I understand," I said; "and the Tsarevitch—does he also take an interest in the Polish ambassador?"
- "The Tsarevitch is not one to be easily made jealous," said Olga; "he goes his way and allows the Grand Duchess to go hers."
- "But the last word must surely be with the Empress," I said, "while she lives."
- "What last word?" asked Olga, surprised.
- "As to the ambassadors; it is she who must approve or reject them, and if this man—"
- "Oh, her Majesty is not one of the particular ones," said Olga; "her policy is to live and let live."
- I could not understand the drift of Olga's remarks, though I did not like to say so; therefore I remained silent. But my face is, or was, a tell-tale one, and I

suppose it now revealed my condition of puzzlement, for Olga suddenly jumped up with a laugh and walked away.

"Oh, Elsa, what a little fool you are!" she said. "One day you will learn that you do not live in Paradise, and the sooner that day comes the less violent will be the shock."

I did not find that the Grand Duchess was any the less fascinating at my next and following visits; on the contrary, she was as kind and as charming each time as upon the first occasion.

One day, having received the commands of the Empress to attend the opera that evening, my mistress bade me take a letter to her Majesty that she was indisposed and unable to be present.

I had not yet seen the Empress, excepting informally, by the favour and the foolishness of the Tsarevitch, and I was somewhat nervous as I was ushered into her Majesty's private apartments. I found her occupied very strangely.

Elizabeth Petrovna was a very remarkable personage. Daughter of Peter the Great by his second wife, she inherited many of her father's gifts, and, alas! some of his vices, and especially that of passion for sensuous enjoyment. During her later years she had rapidly ruined a robust constitution by her inordinate devotion to the use of strong drinks. Her life at this present time was an extremely unhealthy one. Most of the day was spent in bed, whence she conducted the affairs of the State, while the night was devoted to dissipation, as attendance at the theatre at eleven, supper at one—the meal being prolonged, in company with the favourite of the hour or of a few select friends. until about five in the morning, when her Majesty was assisted back to her During these latter years of her life the Empress found it difficult to bring sufficient energy to bear upon the accomplishment of the most trivial matters, and it is a source of wonder to all who knew her how she can have contrived to hold

together and to govern, after a fashion, the vast empire entrusted to her care. Yet, undoubtedly, Russia did not suffer, but rather gained in cohesion and in strength during the reign of Elizabeth. The Empress, emancipated as she was from all those restrictions which bind the virtuous woman, was, nevertheless intensely religious, perhaps feeling, as some hold, that religion is, after all, rather for the sinner than for the saint. She would pass many hours comfortably propped before the "obraz," as they call the pictures of their saints, her favourite ikon being that of the Holy Virgin, of which she was accustomed to make a friend and confidante, telling her sins and sorrows to this picture, and asking for guidance in the daily routine of life, not only as to things spiritual and of good report, but also—strange to say—consulting the image as to the merits of those who would fain be her lovers: which she should favour and which reject, and so forth. I had heard already of the peculiar habits of her Majesty in this respect, and had been greatly shocked, refusing, indeed, to believe my informant. now, as I entered her apartment, I beheld the Great Lady actually engaged in her devotions-kneeling amid cushions before her favourite ikon, and addressing it in affectionate terms, such as one would use in conversation with a child or with a most intimate friend. I stood at the door a short while, not daring to disturb the Empress, and during those few moments I distinctly heard the names of Razoomofsky and of Shuvalof, though what she said of these statesmen I did not catch.

Presently she looked round and saw me, and smiled very kindly.

"Schoglokova," she said, addressing her attendant, a devoted and excellent person whom I liked well enough afterwards, but whose terrible name my German tongue could never quite master, "Schoglokova, help me up."

The attendant raised her mistress and placed her on a couch.

"So," said the Empress, who was dressed in the most negligé fashion possible, wearing something in the nature of a nightdress, with a great fur cloak thrown over it.

"You can leave me, Schoglokova; approach you, little Fraulein, and do not be afraid. I am an Empress, but a very soft-hearted woman; you are the little Countess from Zerbst, nicht wahr? I have heard of you; both His Highness and his wife agree in praising you, and it is rarely indeed that they two agree in anything whatever. How young you are, my child."

"That is my chief complaint, your Majesty," I said.

"Oh, long may you have to complain!" she replied smiling, and then, sighing, "Lord!" she continued, "I was once as young as you, and perhaps as pretty; tell me, have the men found you out yet, little one; have you lovers?"

I blushed. "I am too young to be loved," I said, hesitatingly.

"But not too young to love? is that it?" said the Empress, smiling and patting my hand. "Well, well—never mind; one survives disappointments and outlives that which one believes at the time to be unendurable. I have outlived much disappointment."

I had no wise reply to make to this, so I did the best thing that occurred to me, and gave my message from the Princess.

"Ah," said the Empress, "so! indisposed! Nevertheless I think she will come. Tell your mistress that I shall be pleased if she would make an effort to be present to night, since the new ambassador is to accompany me, whom it is my desire to honour."

"The Polish ambassador? I blurted.
"He himself—Poniatofsky, who arrived this very day; what know you of this person, little Fraulein?"

"Only what Olga Narishkin told me: that he is one who is highly esteemed by the Grand Duchess for political reasons."

"For political reasons—ha, ha! Yes, that is good," laughed the Empress. "Tell her Highness that I would have her come to the Opera House to-night, for political reasons." I bowed, and was for retiring, but the Empress called me back.

"Come and see me again," she said.
"I like your pretty face; you are the only innocent thing in this Court—you do me good and amuse me; now go, and tell the Princess that political considerations connected with the arrival of Count Poniatofsky render her presence at the opera advisable. Afterwards you can, if you like, tell me how she received the message."

"Pardon, Majesty!" I said. "I am her Highness's servant; I must never even seem to be unfaithful!"

"Lord, lord!" said the Empress.
"Honest as well as innocent! There was never such a being seen in this Court before to-day!"

"God forbid, madam!" I said.

"Yet God permits it, little innocent; little innocent you are indeed or you would know it. Now go-Stay! I like you; I do not think you are a fox, like some of the Zerbst women—your Duchess of Anhalt-Zerbst, for instance, and her precious daughter, and-and certain others, I mean!" said the Empress, correcting herself with a cough. "Beware of fox-women, little one, and of wolf-men; most men are wolves when there are lambs about like yourself. Will you kiss an old woman? You will hear many hard things said of me, and all of them true, or partly true."

The Empress kissed me and patted my cheek, said again that I was a pretty child, and allowed me to depart—rather cross, because I must forsooth be called "child," and very perplexed by reason of the curious sayings of the Empress and others, all so kind, yet all so enigmatical and incomprehensible.

When I told my mistress the message of her Majesty, she flushed and stood up.

"What?" she said. "Arrived? Did you say arrived, Elsa? Has he—has the Polish envoy actually arrived to-day? He was not due till to-morrow—are you sure of it?" The eyes of the Grand Duchess flashed like two bright coals and her face was red and suffused.

"Her Majesty certainly said so," I replied, "and requested your Highness to be present for political reasons."

"Were those her words?" she asked.

"Her very words," I said.

The Grand Duchess reflected for a full minute. Then she rose. "The Empress must be obeyed!" she said. "I will go. Stay—"

The Princess sat down and scribbled a note. "I have the toothache, Elsa," she said, giving the slip to me when she had finished. "I must see the dentist without delay. Can I trust you with a letter?"

"Oh, Highness!" I remonstrated.

"Very well; you shall take this note, but go alone. The house of the Zoubnoy Vrach, which is dentist, is upon the Admiralty Plain. If Olga or the others question you, say the Grand Duchess is suffering, and will not be seen until the dentist has been to relieve her pain. Now go and quickly."

I hurried away to the address as quickly as I could. Poor Princess! I had suffered toothache myself, and knew the anguish of it. The note was addressed in Russian, so that I was unable to decipher it, but the number of the house was written in figures, and I easily found it.

And a large and grand mansion it was indeed, I thought, for the abode of a tooth-surgeon, even of a Court dentist.

Nevertheless, the note was taken from

me by the powdered Swiss at the front door, and I departed.

To my surprise and delight I encountered Douglas in the great square.



Kneeling before her favourite ikon.

He asked me what I did at this mansion.

"The Grand Duchess has toothache," I said, "and sent me for the dentist."

"To the house of the Polish ambassa-

dor!" exclaimed Douglas, and went into such a fit of coughing and laughing that I thought he would have choked. I said nothing, for I could explain nothing, and I feared to commit my mistress.

If the Grand Duchess, for reasons of her own, chose to pretend that she summoned the dentist when in reality she desired to greet the ambassador of a friendly power, what was that to me?

For once in my life I was sorry I had met Douglas.

CHAPTER VIII.

Upon my return to the apartments of the Grand Duchess, I found that the anteroom was empty, Catherine having sent away both Olga and the other—I knew not whither. She herself came out of her room to see me.

"Is he come," she said—"had he really arrived—did you deliver the letter?"

"Who, Highness?" I said. "I went to the house of the dentist."

Catherine stamped her foot.

"Hush, little fool," she said; "it is Poniatofsky--Poniatofsky, the ambassador-do you not understand? The Lord help all idiots. Run down and be ready to receive him at the west sidedoor: he will announce himself as dentist; quickly now-bid him muffle his face-go down at once!" I had never seen the Grand Duchess so agitated as at this moment. Truly this Polish gentleman must be an important factor in the political plans of my mistress, though how and why I could not imagine!

I was in time to meet the visitor at the west side-door. I told the attendant that the Princess suffered sadly and expected the *Vrach*, and a moment later he came—a muffled figure, rather tall, with little showing of his face by reason of the mantle which he wore over a plain kaftan.

I asked this man whether he was the dentist of the Grand Duchess, to which he replied with a grave bow.

"The Grand Duchess awaits you, Mon-

sieur l'Ambassadeur," I whispered, as we hastened up the stairs and entered the empty anteroòm; "will you attend her?"

He glanced sharply at me, and lowered his mantle for a moment; it was a pleasant face and attractive; but he looked pale and haggard.

"Is she well, is she well?" he said.
"Oh, I hunger for her!"

This was a surprising speech, but there was more surprise to follow; for when the ambassador hurriedly pushed open the door of the apartment, I saw the Princess within, looking the very type of flushed expectancy; she gave a cry of joy, as it seemed, when Poniatofsky appeared at the threshold.

The Pole banged the door in my face, but banged it so hard that it unexpectedly flew partly open again, and through the space thus formed I distinctly saw that the two had rushed into one another's arms and were clasped in the fondest embrace.

I closed the door softly and sat down. This was a revelation to me; the first ray of the light that was to illumine and make clear many things which had hitherto been unknown and unguessed. From this moment my eyes were opened, and the innocence of my childhood began to take flight.

During the quarter of an hour that the Princess and her lover remained together, I thought over all that she had said to me at our first meeting-thought over it under a new light, and understood what had before been incomprehensible. had eaten of the tree of knowledge, and the taste of the fruit was, at this first trying, very bitter, so bitter that I shed tears during that quarter of an hour, and had almost made up my mind that I must, after all, abandon my new and promising career and return home, for I could see no profitable end to the complications amongst which, I now began to understand, my lot had been cast. I felt frightened and knew not what best to do. I could not consult Douglas, which would have been

the proper course, if possible, he being my guardian; but this was out of the question, for the secrets of the Grand Duchess must not be revealed by me to the servants of the Grand Duke.

Presently Poniatofsky came out; he looked very different now—his eyes radiant and glowing, and with the flush of happiness upon his cheeks. He said nothing, but walked hurriedly across the room to depart. At the door he turned.

"Pardon, mademoiselle," he said, "and thanks." He took a ring from among several upon his finger and was for pressing it into my hand, but I turned my back upon him.

"No, no!" I said, shuddering in spite of myself.

"As you will," he said; "but I thank you, all the same."

I was in attendance upon the Grand Duchess at the opera in the evening, and I observed with surprise the formality of the meeting between my mistress and the Polish ambassador, who was present. If the Empress had desired to gather the evidence of flushed cheeks and an agitated mien she must have been sadly disappointed; for the two met without any show of excitement, although, for all the Empress knew, this was their first coming together after many months.

Her Majesty, as it appeared to me, both at this time and afterwards, was divided in her sympathies between the Prince and his wife in their differences; siding now with one and now with the other; pathetically anxious, in spite of the bad example which she herself set to these young people, to preserve as far as possible the outward respectability of Court life. How could she expect to do so, herself so dissolute! and alas, how could I hope, in the midst of so corrupt a community, to preserve my blessed ignorance of things evil?

As time went, my natural gaiety of disposition became marred by the growth of knowledge, and I was not very happy during that first year of my life in Russia. The Grand Duchess, by means of clever management, contrived to keep her intimacy with Poniatofsky more or less a secret for a while, but gradually the whole Court came to know of it, and when this was the case Catherine, after her manner, herself no longer made a secret of the matter, but braved it out in the face of all

And the only individual at Court who seemed to know nothing of the intrigue, and to care less, was Peter the Tsarevitch, who, for his part, was too busy with his Holsteiner regiment, his card-playing, his marionettes, and his LizooshkaVorontsova to have leisure for other matters.

But gradually I began to have cares of my own to bear, as well as the grief which I felt in the contemplation of the conduct of those whom I served.

In the first place, things went crossly between Douglas and myself.

I had begun to feel by this time that Douglas ought no longer to treat me de haut en bas, as a child. I ought now to be loved; I was old enough to receive consideration from him as for a comely maiden of an attractive age. If I had been prodigal of testimony to my love for him I would be prodigal no longer. If he desired to know that I still loved him, which, Lord knew, I did, he must find it out in the usual way, by courting me.

Accordingly I began to assume a hauteur towards Douglas whenever I saw him, which was not too often, though we lived in the same palace, and that—now it was summer—in the country at Oranienbaum, near Peterhof. And at first this assumption of dignity only served to amuse him, so that he laughed and rallied me upon it; but after a while my coldness—for I seemed to avoid him—appeared to pain and surprise him, and one day, overtaking me in the gardens he bade me walk with him, and have this matter out.

"What matter?" said I.

"You are angry with me," he replied, "and without cause so far as I know; come, unbosom yourself to me. Have I unwittingly offended?"

"Offended? surely not!" I said, assum-

perfect ing calmness, but feeling a variety agitating emotions: indignation, offended pride, and with it all an intense desire to throw myself into his arms and weep his upon bosom.

"Then why has your manner changed towards me?" he asked.

"I was a child," I said; "children may do or say that which would be ridiculous in a grown maiden."

"Be a child again, Elsa, I entreat you," he said, seriously enough. He did not laugh at my "grown maiden," which was really very

kind and thoughtful of him, since I was but a few months older than when he first saw me, and my assumption of mature dignity must have amused him. I was touched, but I maintained the position I had taken up.

"Be a child, Elsa, at least to me," he repeated.

"No, I will not," I said; "I am now a woman, and as a woman you shall treat me; I am out of the nursery and in the great world. Others do, and why not you?"

"What others?" asked Douglas, in surprise, looking down at me.

"Oh, Katkoff and Lef Naryshkin and everyone but you," I blushed.

As a matter of fact both of the men I mentioned had frequently been more attentive to me than I liked. Both were partisans of my mistress, part of the nucleus of the great party which she gradually assembled to her side, one by one, throughout the next three or four years. Lef Naryshkin, Olga's brother, was more clown than



"The Grand Duchess awaits you."

rogue, but Katkoft was a man whose personality was from the first disagreeable and repugnant to me.

Douglas flared up at my words.

"You don't tell me, Elsa, that these men have presumed to worry you with attentions? You, a child—they—"

"I say I am not a child!" I cried,

stamping my foot; it was too bad of Douglas to insist in this way upon my youthfulness. "I am not a child, and their attentions do not worry me."

Douglas was silent for a minute or two. Then he spoke gravely:

"Mistress Elsa," he said, "that I am your guardian you know; that I am your true friend I think you know also."

"Nay, I do not!" I cried, foolishly. "I had thought it, but you have grown unkind."

"I have not meant it," he continued; "I am indeed your friend. I think of you continually, and of how best I ought to counsel you for your good; you are, in a manner, my ward, and I am responsible for your welfare."

"Proceed, Mr. Pastor; this is a long and eloquent sermon!" I laughed. I spoke foolishly, but it was to hide my real feeling, for I loved him well, and it moved me to hear him say that he thought constantly of me.

"In a word, you are living in the midst of persons and circumstances which are unfit for the contemplation of a chi—I mean a maiden. I would not speak to you of such things, but they are a matter of common knowledge, and you must be aware that her Highness, your mistress——"

"Oh!" I laughed, "and his Highness, your master—let us be impartial!" Douglas flushed, and bowed his head a little.

"At any rate," he said, "you understand that things exist in this Court which are unbecoming for a maiden's contemplation. Again, of those men whom you mentioned, and who have paid

you attentions, one is a fool and the other a rogue. I would trust neither with you."

"You are very good," I said, laughing scornfully. "I can trust both, and myself better than either. To what does all this tend?"

"To this, that my advice to you is to go home to Zerbst. I say it with sorrow, for I shall miss you sorely; but to say it is my duty."

"Sorrow not," I said, "for I shall not go. I have promised to serve the Grand Duchess, and serve her I shall."

"That is your decision?" said Douglas. I could not help thinking—though perhaps the wish fathered the thought—that he looked relieved.

"Yes," I said, "it is my decision."

"Then, at least," he continued, "beware, for God's sake, of Katkoff; he has a bad name. You will not misunderstand me; I do not speak in jealousy; but neither of the men you have mentioned is a fitting companion for you. The Grand Duchess will not protect you; there is nothing to hope for from her Highness. Will you promise me this?"

"No, I will promise nothing," I cried angrily, stamping my foot; "who are you to ask it? Am I a child to be told I may do this and leave that undone?" I flashed my eyes at him and fled away. Cruel, unkind Douglas; how dare he presume to dictate to me? How dare he, above all, tell me to my face that he is not jealous of Katkoff and the other?

That was the crux, and I knew it. What was more, I determined that if Douglas was not jealous, I would at least do my best to make him so.

TO BE CONTINUED



Mrs. Caudie,—"A perfectly disgusting state to come home in. What! you say you haven't had a drop? Just let me hear you say Preliminary Ultimatum!"



T is a pleasant moment when, closing behind me my study door-shutting away for a time all the dear The Idler domesticities of a housetakes his holder-I sit down in my seat. capacity of book-taster to see what quality of wares our authors and publishers are placing before an avid With one's old books enshelved public. around the room it is so much easier fittingly to appraise the new-to determine which of the many candidates among the latest comers can compel, by intrinsic merit, space being made for them among those already endeared to us by a thousand different ties.

To-day, with a fully-loaded revolver beside me,—I speak of no lethal weapon, but of that true friend of the modern journalist-bookman, the revolving case, which stands four-square to all the winds of criticism—there is but little time to spend in dallying with the outsides of the volumes before proceeding to cast the eye critical over their contents. With a broadbladed paper knife of olive wood, rich to the user in reminiscences of the classic shores of Lake Como, with some scraps of paper on which to set down such jots and tittlings (I thank thee, Jabberjee, for teaching me that phrase) as arise in the

mind of THE IDLER among his books, and with the latest pencil which an apt invention has placed to hand, wherewith to make such jots and tittlings, I reach out and give a lazy turn to the revolving case made mine by matrimony. (I have learned that wedding presents are not all pretty inutilities).

Scanning the titles and A Sweet, cover-colours of the books Sad Poet. as the case revolves, I find my eye first taken by both in the instance of Christina Rossetti: a Biographical Critical Study, and by Bell (Hurst & Blackett, Mackenzie Limited). Christina Rossetti, herself one of our most remarkable women poets, was one of a gifted family, and a member of one of the most noted "circles" in the whole history of art and letters, so that there are three good reasons for her biography proving attractive, even fascinating, to a reader of literary instincts. I draw forth the dainty, grey-covered volume, and at once find myself musing on the appropriateness of the bindingand, as a natural consequence, on the frequency with which the contents and cover of a book jar one with the other. This is a subject on which I have "views," but as that is another story, to use the phrase

which, if report be true, is ever on the lips of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, I will not at the present moment inflict them upon the reader. I will merely say that the cover of this memoir of Christina Rossetti typifies, so to speak, the prevailing sadness of her muse, and also the low tone of Mr. Mackenzie Bell's portrait of her. The author has divided his book into two parts, the biographical and the critical, and has surely erred therein, for the province of the biographer is that of revealing to us the personality and life-story of one in whom we are already interested through the work which he or she may have accomplished. The reader of this volume finds himself agreeing with the old paradox, which declared the part to be greater than the whole; for the work would have gained as a mémoir pour servir (and it is in the nature of things such) had much of the critical portion been eliminated, and the more essential parts embodied at their proper places in the "Life." Christina Rossetti strongly accentuated the truth that, as Shelley put it,

"Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought,"

for in her poems, and notably in those which "stick in the mind," a sweet sadness is the prevailing characteristic. Take, for example, that beautiful lyric, "When I am dead, my dearest," which is, perhaps, the best known of her songs. For my own part I confess that it moves me deeply, yet it has quite an opposite effect upon my friend Pyro, whom I have heard declare—after his wife had just sung it, too-that the sentiments expressed are unnatural and unpleasant. Poor Pyro, as he knows,—I pity him in his inappreciation. He is otherwise sane. ing this record of Christina Rossetti's life, I find myself especially interested in learning that in her early childhood she used to visit her grandfather, Gaetano Polidori, (owing to whose admiring affection she first saw herself in print) at a cottage which he occupied at the quiet little village of Holmer Green in Buckinghamshire. To one who knows all the banks and lanes of that rural neighbourhood, who lived, in fact, for some years among them, it comes as a curious revelation to find that it was there that one of our great poets gained an intimacy with Nature. Holmer Green, Little Missenden and Beman End-these unsophisticated congeries of cottages. familiar as they are to me, become hallowed in my memory by the lateacquired knowledge that Christina Rossetti had stayed there as a child. I wonder whether the Polidori cottage is yet standing, and whether it can be identified? This same corner of Buckinghamshire was already rich in poetical association, Milton dwelt at Chalfont, Edmund Waller at Coleshill, where local tradition points out the ancient oak in which he sat and composed his verses. With the aid of Mr. William Michael Rossetti, the only surviving member of the poet's family, Mr. Bell has given us a volume which, despite some redundancies, is yet a work rich in true literary interest, and one which the more markedly accentuates the impression that we already had of Christina Rossetti's genius and personality.

The next work on which I Αn lay my hand is in strong con-Octogenarian's trast with the one which I Autohave just put down; that biography. dealt with a quiet, unobtrusive life, this deals at some length with a life of storm and stress. It takes the form of two large volumes clothed in scarlet, on the covers of which are to be read My Life in Two Hemispheres, by Sir Charles Gavan Duffy (T. Fisher At once I may confess to a preference for the first portion of the work, wherein the veteran tells of his life in Ireland and England, before he left Europe for a long and distinguished career under the Southern Cross.

in "loyal" Ulster, the son of a Catholic shopkeeper, young Duffy early followed family tradition as a "rebel." With but little education in the accepted sense, but with an inborn fondness for books and the power which they give to those who use them properly, he found himself, while

still a very young man, sub-editor of a Dublin newspaper. In recalling this period, Sir Charles has to tell of Thomas Moore. of Daniel O'Connell, and other notable Irishmen. His description of the poet seems actually to bring us into personal touch with him. The sub-editor had been disturbed during his dinner hour by a visitor. "When I descended I found a little, middle-aged man, with pleasant smile and lively eyes, but of a countenance far from comely, and so elaborately dressed that the primrose gloves which he wore did not seem out of harmony with the splendour of his attire. But my interest was awakened in an instant when he told

me his 'name was
Moore—Thomas Moore.'" In such
attractive "bits" about notable individuals these two volumes are rich. Rich
also are they in good stories—those
"plums" to the reader of reminiscences. Sir Charles is an old man,
an observant man, a travelled man,
and, above all, an Irishman, all of

which circumstances combine to render him one of the best of story tellers. His volumes will be in demand "at all the libraries," so that most of my readers will probably become acquainted with these good things in their proper place, Sir Charles Duffy's pages. Yet one story I



From the pencil drawing by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, October, 1852, now in the possession of Mr. W. M. Rossetti.

(By permission of Messrs. Hurst & Blackett, Ltd.)

must give myself the pleasure of quoting, if only for the enlivening of what I imagine some readers are wont to look upon as the dullest portion of a periodical, that which is concerned with new books. The tale is told of a "good-looking, clever scamp, an Englishman named H——," who, having been a reporter in Dublin,

became editor of a new Galway journal. "After a year he reappeared in his old 'What brings you here?' one of his old acquaintances demanded; 'are you not editor of the Galway Thun-'Be more accurate, my dear boy, the Galway Irishman.' 'And how came you, you Cockney impostor, to edit the Irishman?' 'Why not, my son? I am more Hibernian than the Hibernians, I can spout like Burgh Quay, handle a cudgel like Donnybrook Fair, and I've got an Irish wife; I'll trouble you to beat that record!' 'And your hopeful experiment, does it still prosper?' 'No, sir; that great journal which I created died in my arms.' 'Died?' exclaimed his friend; 'How did it die with that tremendous backing of agitators and priests you used to parade in your leaders? 'That was just it, dear; it died of too many patrons.' 'What do you mean?' 'You don't know, my son,' rejoined the ex-editor, 'what a Galway patron does for his favourite journal.' 'No, tell me.' 'He dines with the editor every time he comes to town, writes a libel once a quarter, and never pays his subscription." The only comment to be made upon this story is that Sir Charles Gavan Duffy's "Cockney" certainly showed himself a well-Hibernianised one.

After the manifold delights Picturesque of My Life in Two Hemispheres Dublin. with its rich Irish flavour, I find something particularly appropriate in my next volume from among the "revolver's" load of recent works. This is Picturesque Dublin: Old and New, by Frances Gerard, with illustrations by Rose Barton, A.R.W.S. (Hutchinson & Co.) Simple in get-up, the book is full of interest, literary and pictorial, for both writer and artist have very evidently come to their work in a loving spirit. Even to one who only knows the famous old bookshops of Dublin prospectively and by repute, the taking up of a volume such as this makes reminiscences crowd upon the

mind,—of men who trod the streets of the Irish capital before they became the property of the world and of Fame. We think at once of Jonathan Swift, the savage humorist, and one of the most striking literary figures of his century; of his younger contemporaries, the poor sizar of Trinity College, Oliver Goldsmith, and the great orator Edmund Burke; and many others of equal or lesser note endeared to us by innumerable volumes of wit and wisdom. The literary associations of Dublin would, indeed, by themselves afford materials for a book of great and varied interest, but Miss Gerard deals not only with this but with the social and historical sides of the Irish capital, and in doing so gossips in a fresh and lively fashion. As we read on we find ourselves passing through crowds of the witty and the beautiful who have shone in Dublin, a city famous all the world over for its wits and its beauties, and what is more, we get to realise strongly why it was that Mr. Meredith imported his daring heroine Diana Merion from the sister island. The reader of this book seems to know his Dublin as though he had visited it, which shows to what good purpose Miss Gerard and Miss Barton have wrought; to those who know and love the city the volume should afford a veritable treat,—a treat of the richest, and warranted not to disagree with anyone-that of reviving pleasant recollections.

I sometimes find myself The Bible wondering whether Charles in Ruskin's Lamb, had he lived in these Works. days of book "making," would have included among his "books which are no books-biblia-abiblia"the many volumes which are made up of "bits" on a given subject from the works of a given writer. I suppose that he would not, as he did not include in his catalogue of "things in books' clothing" those "Beauties"—compiled by Dr. William Dodd & Co.—which were so much in vogue in his time. My "Index Prohibitorious" would be extended to the inclusion of most of such volumes. Yet that such a book may be well done, and full of interest, is shown by the publication of *The Bible References of John Ruskin* by Mary and Ellen Gibbs.

(George Allen). The makers of this book have gone with pious care through all Mr. Ruskin's works, and have gathered together the numerous passages in which he has obviously made use of Biblical inspiration; these are arranged alphabetically according to subject, and there are appendices giving chapter and verse for each reference. The volume, neatly and tastefully got up, will doubtless prove attractive to many in these scrap-loving days. It is, certainly, a notable addition to Ruskinian (I do not say Ruskin's) " biblia-abiblia."

Atthe Idling monthly among output of Fiction. fiction, one has to hold up the hands of wonder, and exclaim. with the Wizard's Dominie, " Pro-di-gious!" No one can nowadays pretend

read all the new novels, or at least they can do no more than pretend, although I have heard a young man (and one whose office hours I believe are from nine to six) declare that he reads almost all. I had a keen desire on hearing this to emulate Charles Lamb and ask permission to "feel the gentleman's bumps," but let the statement pass in pitying—yes, pitying,

wonder. Frankly, I confess that I do nothing of the sort. Life would assuredly not be worth living in such circumstances, and yet I cap enjoy as heartily as most a well-written or a cleverly-conceived tale. Among those which I have read recently



Swift's Temple at Delville.
(By permission of Messrs. Hutchinson & Co.)

one stands out as notable for a variety of reasons. "Good, yes; but will it be popular?" I find myself asking again and again, as I read *The Minister of State*, by John A. Steuart (William Heinemann). The story is clever, undoubtedly clever, quite, I think, the best that Mr. Steuart has yet given us. Mr. Balfour, speechifying on the subject of fiction—a subject

in which, for some reason not difficult to divine, Ministers of Cabinet rank seem fond of dabbling—Mr. Balfour recently complained that we had not had enough of the novel biographical. Mr. Steuart's that he was a herd-boy on his uncle's farm at Pitweem, until—but I will not give the story away in the manner affected by some reviewers. The romance—if I may say so without shocking any sensi-

"How can we stave them off for another day?"

From "The Tragedy of the Korosko," by A. Conan Doyle.

(By permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.)

story was probably completed at the time that Mr. Balfour gave his address, but—great minds will jump—he has in it gone one step towards a removal of the reproach which Mr. Balfour chose to think existed. He gives us in effect a biography of his hero, Evan Kinloch, from the time

tiveness which the author may have on the subject—is likely to strike some readers as a fresh development of has been what rather foolishly dubbed "Kail yard" fiction, for the action takes placeactually, or in a reflected manner on, or about, a Scotch farmstead. Steuart has evidently portrayed some of the characters of this locality with loving carefulness, and has been peculiarly successful in his presentation of the old dominie under whose guidance Evan commenced a career of splendid This triumph. dominie is, so far as I am aware, a new type in fiction. Being a man of great natural talent who has drifted into one of the backwaters of life, he takes a

pathetic delight in the abundant promise and rich fulfilment of his pupil, the exherd-boy of Pitweem. I feel on closing the book that in him I have actually made a new friend who will remain with me to be an old one. In his hero, however, I find Mr. Steuart less successful. We are

presented to a prodigy, one before whom another Scotsman, the Admirable Crichton, might have quailed, but somehow we fail to feel altogether convinced that we are following the story of such a genius. When, for example, Evan has achieved any distinction, from his early triumphs at the University, up to his appointment as a Minister of State, we do not altogether realise how he has done it. we only learn what he has done through the gathering of family and friends at his native place, where his father and sister, the dominie, and relatives at Pitweem, all cry "Pro-di-gi-ous!" in their various and characteristic manners. Mr. Steuart may retort that such would be only natural. The author's style—to merely touch upon that fascinatingly elusive quality-seems to indicate him a loving student of the two greatest living masters of prose-fiction, Mr. George Meredith, and Mr. Thomas Hardy. The fact that the story introduces, in its Parliamentary scenes, and under the very thinnest of disguises, two of the greatest politicians of the later Victorian period, and that its interest turns largely upon such modern financial jobbery as that of the great Liberator frauds, will probably help to make it popular. It is a really interesting novel, far above "the ruck" of current fiction.

The English in Egypt.

Another story, which is excellent in its way, and a striking contrast to The Minister of State, is The Tragedy of the

Korosko, by A. Conan Doyle (Smith, Elder & Co.) If the author had not already manifested a marvellous versatility as a writer of fiction, his latest work might have surprised us—but when we remember The White Company, Rodney Stone, and The Sign of Four, we know that there is no subject limitation to Mr. Conan Doyle's range as story-wright. The plot of The Tragedy of the Korosko is, I might almost say, conspicuous by its absence, for the book is but the record of an

eventful pleasure trip up the Nile, in 1895, in "the Korosko, a turtle-bottomed, round-bowed, stern-wheeler, with a 30in. draught, and the lines of a flat-iron." Of course, the unexpected happened -one is always on the look-out for the unexpected in reading a romance -and in the formidable shape of a Dervish raid. Things looked very black for the international party, which consisted of half-a-dozen Britishers, three Americans, and a Frenchman, the last mentioned of whom persisted in preaching the non-existence of the bellicose Dervishes. The story is frankly named a tragedy, and the reader knows that some of the party must succumb; those who fall seem to have the best of it, for the author has made very real for us the horrors of being borne prisoners across terrible desert by the fanatical followers of the Mahdi. How it was that the majority escaped from their captors I do not intend to betray, suffice it that they did escape and that dire vengeance overtook the raiders. Mr. Conan Doyle has individualised his characters with considerable success, and he has transferred to his pages with remarkable effect the "atmosphere" of the desert. I must, however, confess to having the impression that it is in a sense a story with a purpose, and a purpose such as would in nine cases out of ten prove fatal to the story itself; I feel, that is, that the author while weaving his romance has wished to impress his views with regard to the English occupation of Egypt; views which I can recall his vigorously enunciating in an after-dinner speech on his return from his Egyptian trip to which we doubtless owe this story. While it will not add to the reputation of the author of The White Company nor to the popularity of the creator of Sherlock Holmes, The Tragedy of the Korosko may be recommended to anyone on the lookout for a couple of hours' excellent entertainment.



Gathered themselves together from reeking swamp and steaming forest.

AN UNOFFICIAL AFFAIR.

A STORY OF THE WEST AFRICAN FOREST.

BY HAROLD BINDLOSS.

ILLUSTRATED BY D. B. WATERS.

A HAGGARD, fever-worn white man lay panting in a tent beside a muddy river which flows through the great palm-forests on the northern border of a certain British colony in Western Africa.

The flickering light of a smoky lamp fell upon the sufferer's hollow face, while a comrade, scarcely less sickly, knelt close by, turning over the contents of a medicine chest, and anathematising the mosquitoes which settled thirstily upon him now that his hands were too busy to drive them away. The rain swirled down the canvas above, and the darkness outside seemed filled with the rush of the tropical deluge.

The sick man was Kirkstone Lindley, a civil officer of the British service, and his companion Lieutenant Marvin, in command of a detachment of black troops, and the two had been sent up into the fringe of the wild "hinterland" on a diplomatic visit to a bush headman. Inland traders had complained bitterly that certain lawless chieftains levied blackmail on all the oil passing through their dominions, and occasionally seized the rubbergatherers as slaves. This, they pointed out, seriously interfered with the commerce of the western border, and Lindley went north to explain to the depredators that the Government objected strongly to such proceedings. The bush headman,

however, was quite aware that the authorities would be very loth to send up a costly expedition into his pestilential swamps, and felt himself master of the situation.

So at first he made lying promises, and, it is probable, tampered with the provisions supplied the little party, for most West African natives are adepts at vegetable poisoning. Afterwards, when a mysterious sickness broke out among the handful of black troops, and both the white officers went down with fever, he changed his tone, and Lindley considered it prudent to retire. Now he lay camped beside the river, waiting until his men recovered strength to continue the southward march.

Presently Marvin said, "All the antipyrin's done, and I'll have to give you the old draught again. It can't be helped, you know."

Lindley stretched out a burning, claw-like hand. "Headache and deafness are almost worse than fever," he answered, as he gulped the bitter mixture down. Then Marvin added, thoughtfully, "I hardly like to worry you now, but I can't see my way out of this at all. Most of the carriers are crippled with Guineaworm, or pretend to be; the rest would bolt if they got the chance; and only half the men are fit for duty. The scouts say the bushmen* are gathering about us in force, and it would be precious awkward if they were to rush us now."

"It's hard to lie helpless when there's so much to be done," was the feeble answer, "but it can't be helped, and you never know your luck — especially in Africa. Anyway, we can only wait, and that's the worst of all." Then, with a groan, the sick man turned his face from the light, for his head ached intolerably, and a burning pain racked every joint. Marvin sat still in despondent silence, listening to the roar of falling water, while

the rain came down as it only can in the tropics, smiting the quivering palm-fronds like solid rods, and beating the lilies into shreds of white. It was overpoweringly hot, with a clammy, steamy heat, which crushes the life out of an unacclimatised European, and the fire of the malaria was in his blood as well.

Presently he sprang to his feet as the crash of an over-loaded flint-lock gun rang out above the sound of the deluge, and a handful of jagged potleg ripped through the canvas. Lindley raised himself on one elbow, and Marvin turned down the lamp for safety's sake. An illuminated tent makes too good a target for even an indifferent marksman to miss.

"Those weary bushmen," he said.

"After the Haussa stalked the last I thought they had learned better. Lie still, Lindley; I suppose I must go and see."

As he stepped forth from the tent a clamour of startled voices rose through the rain, and he heard the hoarse challenge of a Haussa sentry. The ringing of a Snider and a crackle of brushwood followed, and then all was still again. When the white man's eyes became accustomed to the darkness he made out a group of shadowy figures standing, rifle in hand, beside frail shelters of plaited palm boughs, half-hidden by the mist that rose like steam from the soaking earth. swarm of naked carriers floundered aimlessly about the camp, and presently a big black sergeant, with the blood of the northern Moslem in his veins, strode forword, and raised a dripping hand in salute.

"Any order, sah?" he said; and his officer answered, "Send two of your best men to catch that fellow if they can, and keep those carriers still——" Marvin broke off suddenly, for the misty forest reeled before his eyes, but with an effort

^{* &}quot;Bushman" is the term universally used on the West Coast to describe the orest tribes, i.e., men of the bush.

he added, "Double the sentries; palaver set," and dragged himself away. When he reached the tent he mixed a draught from the medicine chest and flung himself down upon the mats, shaking in every limb. "I never thought I was so bad as that," he said half-aloud. "What on earth will become of us now?" Then his overtaxed strength gave way, and he sank into the limp insensibility which occasionally brings relief from the pains of intermittent fever.

An hour later a sentry, hearing a suspicious rustling of undergrowth, fired his rifle at a venture, and when the worn-out men staggered to their feet again they found that the portion of the camp where the bush carriers, being heathen, lay apart was empty. All had vanished silently into the forest while the others slept, and, what was worse, most of the provisions and ammunition cases had vanished with Thereupon Sergeant Aweh them too. approached the tent, and drawing apart the canvas peered inside. By the faint light of the turned-down lamp he saw one figure tossing upon the mats, and moaning as if in pain, while another leaned back against a deal case, very grim and silent, with a big revolver hanging by a lanyard about its neck. The set teeth grated as he listened, and the fingers of one hand clenched themselves, but the Moslem knew his officer was not awake, and closing to the wet canvas he slipped quietly away.

Shortly afterwards an informal council was held beneath a bower of palm-fronds, which leaked like a large-meshed colander, and five men of a soldier race which has served the British Government very faithfully in the forests of Western Africa took part therein. They were Haussas from a healthy land beyond the feverbelt, who had journeyed south to enter the service of a power they had heard was even greater than that of the northern Arabs.

"The matter is very plain," said Ser-

geant Aweh, in the semi-Arabic tongue of the hinterland. "The officer-men are both sick, and they will die if they stay here much longer. We are few, and the sickness is upon us also, so if the bushmen fall upon us now there is no hope of escape."

Aweh glanced at the rest, who nodded approval, and said there was wisdom in the words, and that Allah had doubtless given their comrade an understanding Then he continued, "The white officers must not die, for they are just masters and kind; neither is it fitting that the naked heathen should slay the faithful when they are too sick to fight. Now beyond the Malumba river an officer of the other white nation holds an outpost with many little black soldiers, and, if it be the will of Allah, I and another may reach them and ask for help. Who comes with me?"

Then one private, who acted as tentorderly, said he had heard the white men discuss that very plan, and decide that it was impossible; while another, who had once accompanied a frontier survey, declared that the bush tribes were accursed devil-worshippers, who would assuredly hack the messengers in pieces.

Aweh settled the matter by bringing his Snider-but viciously down upon the speaker's bare foot, and saying:

"At the worst, two men can but die, and here there is no hope. Therefore, I, Sergeant Aweh, go for one, and I ask not the officers, for they would assuredly say 'No,' being too sick to understand."

"I also," said a private, rising to his feet; "but we go by different ways, that if the heathen spear the one, the other may bear the message. Lend me ten rounds of ammunition, Amadu, and you the long sword-bayonet, Corporal Attou."

Then the conference broke up, and presently a startled sentry dropped his rifle from the present as his sergeant's voice whispered the password behind him and saw two figures slip past and vanish into the rain like flitting ghosts.

When his temperature fell, with the coolness before the dawn, Marvin awoke somewhat better, for the intermittent fever is always worst at night, and as the first grey light filtered down through the vapour he staggered forth from the tent. He listened gravely to the story of the carriers' desertion, but frowned when he heard that two of his most reliable men were missing as well, apparently, for no reason whatever. Then he went back to the tent with a set face, and met Lindley's enquiring eyes.

"Worse than ever," he said sombrely. "All the carriers have bolted, and taken the provisions, too. That, however, is only what I expected; but I can't understand Aweh and Shalule deserting. They were the best we had, and I would have trusted them with my life."

"So would I," was the feeble answer.
"Well, we must just wait events, and do
the best we can, but it is hardly likely
we'll ever see the coast again."

Five days later it happened that Captain Lucien Thurot, who, with a company of black Senegali soldiers, ruled over a wild region where territory under the protection of France adjoined the British colony, held high festival in his rickety head-Thurot was a restless little quarters. individual, whose inborn love of excitement and merriment many fevers had failed to quite crush out, and his duty was to keep what order he could among the turbulent tribesmen, and see that the perfidious English made no encroachments on the territory of France. theless he occasionally made long journeys to visit the British officers across the border, for he generally found them provided with choice cordials, and some of them could even sing the songs of his own land.

On the night in question, three brother officers of the French service and one English trader had gathered themselves together from reeking swamp and steamy forest. This they did periodically, because they were hungry for the mere sound of a European voice, and the meeting, which generally resolved itself into a three days' carnival, was strictly unofficial, and never mentioned in the reports. Indeed, it sometimes happened that the wily bushman took advantage of their absence to carry off his neighbour's wives or wipe out an offending village.

A glare of many candles lighted up the long room of the pile-raised building, while outside the wet palm-fronds clashed and rustled before a fanning of fiery air, and the mist rolled in columns across the face of the quaking swamps. Inside it was fiercely hot; the damp trickled in great globules down the wainscot, and through the open casements there entered the mingled odours of aromatic wood-smoke, lily-flowers, and the exhalations of river mud, which form the West African bouquet. The guests, however, were well used to both heat and damp, and disregarded the oven-like temperature as they made merry over their wine. The sword of the pestilence hung above their heads, as it were, by a single hair, but they were in boisterous spirits, and applauded vigorously when the English trader, after attempting to tune a dilapidated banjo, commenced a ditty which they could not understand. The indifferent verses were of the pastoral order, and told of English meadows and honeysuckle in deep sunk lanes, and seemed strangely out of place in that region of heat and malaria, pestilence and sudden death.

Then the singer, whose courage had given way at last beneath the racking pain of rheumatic fever and the loneliness of Africa, laid down his banjo with a sigh. "It's a curious world," he said. "Two years ago this night I had all that man could desire, and now I'm stewing like a lost soul in this land of fever. I suppose if the malaria wiped us all out to-morrow no one on earth would care."

"Cest la vie," answered his Gallic neighbour, who understood in part. "Mais alors! here is good wine, and camaraderie, and for the rest it is all the the same in fifty year. Ah! the brave Antoine, he sing now—like an angel, you say?"

"I thought they only played on harps," said the trader, smiling in spite of himself. Then he lapsed into silence,

for a young officer, whose hollow face was curiously flushed, leaned against a pillar with a trophy of savage arms above his head. and chanted in a ringing voice a ballad of revenge and lost Lorraine. This time there was tumultuous applause, which subsided into laughter as a discordant pounding of monkey-skin drums rose up from the compound below, and unlovely voices broke



There are now dead scouts beside the fords.

out into the paddling chanty, "Acha ho." The African is an imitative being, and the negro hewers of wood, inspired by sundry bottles of gin bestowed upon them by the visitors, had extemporised a vociferous concert of their own. But the giver of the feast was equal to the occasion. Carrying a heavy decanter in his hand, he proceeded, none too steadily, towards the verandah, and leaning over the balustrade, hurled the missile among the crouching musicians below with a cry of

"Maudits animaux." A heavy thud followed, and the music ceased suddenly amid the crash of splintering glass, while Lieutenant Antoine took his host to task for wasting the precious vintage on the outside of an unappreciative Krooboy.

Afterwards there was a pause, and the silence was only broken by the patter of heavy drops upon the thatch, and the rustle of palm branches swaying over-

head, until a harsh challenge from a sentry beyond the gate rang through the steamy air. Then the verandah stairway creaked, and a Senegali geant entered the room. wild and draggled object pushed past him into the glow of the lights, and the officers stared in amaze as a tall negro stood before them, leaning heavily upon the fouled muzzle of a

Snider rifle. The mire of many a swamp was crusted from ankle to knee; thorns had scored red lines upon both hands and face; and the shreds of uniform which covered one massy arm were caked and stiff with blood.

The sergeant commenced some rambling explanation, and the guests looked on wondering, until the trader said, "A British Haussa," and went forward, carrying a goblet of wine; but the soldier shook his head and answered in his own tongue, "I am a Moslem, neither will I eat until you have heard. Listen, white men." Then he told the story of the disease-stricken and beleagured camp, and the officers listened with all their ears, while the trader explained such portions as they could not understand. The merriment had faded from their faces before the narrative was done, and Lieutenant Thurot said, "In five days he came, and the bushmen watch every ford. It was a wonderful march—if the tale is true."

The trader translated, and the Moslem's fingers tightened a little about the rusty Snider barrel as he answered grimly, "It is all true—of what use are lies. There were many bushmen, but my people know all the tricks of foreign warfare, and there are now dead scouts beside the fords."

Then Lieutenant Antoine broke in: "I know that tribe. They burned our Gillata village and shot my despatch-carrier, and the English Marvin, I know him too—a good comrade. It is well, then, that we make an example of these pigs of bushmen—eh?"

A hurried consultation followed, after which Captain Thurot favoured the Senegali sergeant with many and somewhat confused instructions, the result of which was that he took the worn-out messenger away, and regaled him with the best the stores contained. Then a bugle rang out through the darkness, and a sound of hurrying feet and jingle of rifle-swivels rose up from the misty compound. An hour later Captain Thurot and another officer of France crawled into their hammocks, while the trader chuckled as he lay in his A hoarse shouting of orders followed, a line of black soldiers swung out of the compound, and filed away beneath the palms; and presently the tramp of feet and crackle of undergrowth grew fainter and fainter, until it died away into the silence of the forest.

One morning, when the deluge had given place to the fierce sunlight which

now and then varies the monotony of the rains, Lieutenant Marvin was seated upon an overturned case in the doorway of his tent. He was then a gaunt and sickly skeleton, with eyes that glittered with fever, but the man who lay beside him, and whom he was trying to feed with scraps of mouldy biscuit and rancid sardines, was in a still more pitiable plight.

"It's no use," said Lindley at length, "I'm afraid I'm too far gone to eat that now. I dreamt I was back in head-quarters, Harry, with iced wine and fruit before me, but the fever is doing its work thoroughly, and I'll never see the Marina again."

"That's nonsense," broke in the other, with an assurance he was far from feeling. "Your temperature is going down, and we'll take you through all right yet." Then the speaker's face grew dark as he added, "We'll have to smash the bushmen first; they're evidently going to rush us to-day."

Lindley made no response, though there was a faint smile in his eyes which showed he quite understood the hopelessness of the case, and Marvin glanced uneasily towards the forest. The tufted fronds of the palms behind the strip of plume-grass and reeds in which the camp lay, with the river in front and the forest behind, rose sharply in a lace-like tracery of green against the brightness above. Here and there fleecy wreaths of mist hung low down among the tall, columnar stems, while an odour as of all manner of spices hung over the whole place, and mingled with the hothouse-like smell of steaming The glare from the river was trying to the eyes, and the burning heat of Africa pierced pitilessly through the tall grass tussocks among which a handful of sickly, half-famished black soldiers lay. All was very still save for the drowsy gurgle of the river among the reeds, and Marvin found it strangely hard to realise that the silent bush was filled with the skulking foe.

Presently a stealthy crackling of under-

growth came out of the forest, and the two white men grasped hands without a word. Marvin limped slowly towards one corner of the breastwork of interlaced palmbranches and thorns, his hot fingers closing about the butt of a big revolver, while his comrade followed him wistfully with his eyes. Both knew that death was very near them then, but the officer's voice rose clearly as he said, "No man fires without my word. If the bushmen once get inside they will cut you up very small; so you had better fight hard to-day."

A fierce growl made answer, and there was a clicking of breech-blocks as a man here and there made sure that the cartridgerim lay snugly home. Then with set teeth and black fingers clenched tightly about the trigger-guards, they waited the coming of the foe.

Suddenly a crackle of firing leapt from trunk to trunk round two sides of the breastwork, and the air seemed filled with a whirring flight of potleg, which struck white splinters from the branches and strewed the camp with the fallen tassels of plume-grass. The echoes rolled across the forest, and Marvin raised his hand. "Hold your fire until you see them," he cried, and a sudden stillness followed, a stillness that was strongly trying to the nerves. Then a succession of heavy ringing reports, very different from the sputter of native flint-lock guns, fell upon his ears.

"Stolen rifles among them, too; but where can they be firing now," he said half aloud. And there was a jingle of swivels as the men about him fidgeted uneasily with there rifles. Next moment the forest seemed alive with rustling creatures, and Marvin strained his eyes in vain to pierce the blue wreaths of acrid vapour which hung over the undergrowth, for the smoke could not rise into that saturated air. Again creepers and brushwood crackled, then opened up before a wild rush of hurrying men, and as the vapour curled aside before a little

puff of air the white men said grimly, "Now comes the end."

Still there was no charge of leaping, matchet-armed figures upon the breastwork, and Marvin could feel his nerves tingle and tighten as he waited. Then the blood stirred madly in his veins, for a European voice called aloud, and there was rapid hammering of rifles beneath the palms. Another order rang out, followed by an ear-splitting shout, something between a roar and a yell, and he knew that a detachment of French Senegalis were driving the foe through the forest. For five minutes there was nothing to be heard but the smashing down of brushwood, the rending of creepers, and a desultory ringing of rifles, and then a bugle sent its shrill call across the misty palms. Presently little groups of ebonyfaced, blue-clad figures strode out of the forest, and came tramping through the plume-grass, and Marvin found himself grasping the hand of a perspiring French officer, while he struggled to find something appropriate to say, for the words seemed to stick in his dried-up throat.

"It is nothings, comarade," the other answered, smiling. "The bushman he is not wait for my Senegali him to écrasser, cochons, cochons"; and the English trader broke in with a chuckle, "The cochons knew better than that, and you can thank those two men of yours we ever got here at all. One reached the outpost half-dead, and we picked the other up on the way, dragging himself along with a reed spear in his side. However, we've brought provisions and drugs, and I enlisted carriers for you, too—at the point of the bayonet, so to speak; it took one section all their time to get them here at all. And now, no more talking, we're going to fix up a high-class meal, and have a great time afterwards."

The trader was as good as his word, and the festivities broken off at the outpost were renewed on an extensive scale,



"No man fires without my word."

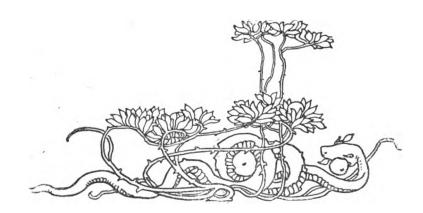
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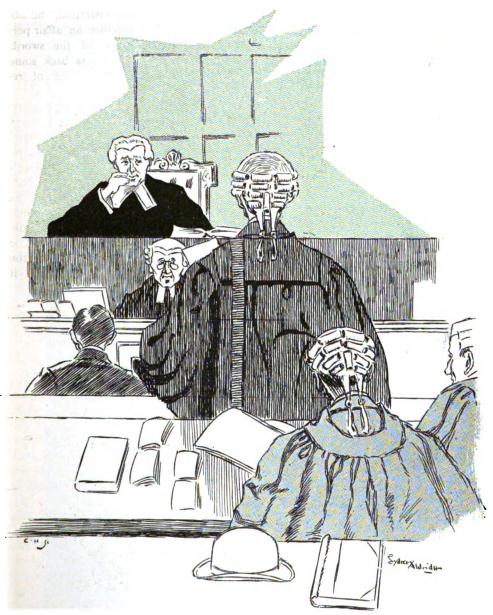
fort he Senegalis, who were Moslem too, fraternised with the British Haussas. Even Lindley, after being regaled on tinned soups and a little good wine, felt fresh hope and strength awake within him, and, lying propped against a roll of matting, laughed until the tears ran down his hollow cheeks at the sallies of his Gallic friends.

Finally, just as the coppery sun dipped behind the forest and the burning day came to a close, Marvin sent for the two men who had carried the tidings, and addressed them briefly: "For leaving camp without an order there is extra drill," he said, "but the officers of the Government do not forget faithful service; wait and see what shall come about." And Sergeant Aweh silently raised his hand in salute, and helped his wounded comrade away.

Captain Thurot also had something to say. "I like not many precis and letters from the Administration," he observed; "this is altogether an affair personal, between brothers of the sword. So you send me provisions back some day—and there is no writing of reports."

Marvin laughed and agreed, the more so that he had no desire for much weary official investigation; and next morning, with many assurances of their eternal admiration and friendship, the French officers took themselves away. In due time the little party safely reached the coast, but, like many other things which happen in the frontier bush, the whole details of that journey are not to be found in any colonial record. As the kindly soldier of France had said—it was an entirely unofficial affair.



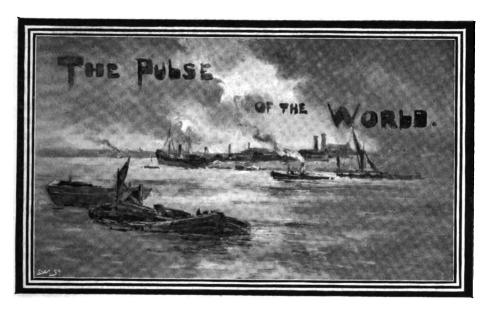


His Lordship.—" What is that peculiar rasping noise I hear outside the Count?"

Counsel for Plaintiff.—" Oh, it's only my learned brother, the counsel for the defendant, my lord, filing his affidavits."



NEAR THE EAST INDIA DOCKS.



BY ARTHUR M. YOUNG.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. ARTHUR ROUSE.

HE meeting of the waters: the deep sea pool, where first the long grey beard of Father Thames is dashed with brine: where first his crested locks are curled, and foamed, and twisted by the biting North Sea wind that blows the breathless laughter from his lips! See how his brawny shoulders plunge and heave as wave meets wave: and how he ploughs a pathway through the green, sweeping aside the rolling element, great swimmer that he is! From those strange springs within the Cotswold Hills, which bubble through the centuries, and know not either time or teen; past woods, and fields, and meadows; hamlets, towns, and cities; gathering breath with every mile and strength every milestone, he comes a veritable giant; great, strong, pestuous, alike in force and worthy of the sea!

It is a fine sight, this meeting of the waters: this great artery of the world,

gathering volumes as it throbs and beats from the heart of the world; palpitating, sweeping onwards and outwards to the fuller life!

On the silent highway of the tide ships pass and repass. Argosies of golden grain-sun-born in foreign lands-Eastern fabrics, woven with the life's thread of strange peoples, and laden with all market and unmarketable wares: from the East, merchandise and gold: from the West, gold and merchandise: huge transports, exchanging Continents. with their hearts of throbbing life locked up in iron-we see all this, and it affects us nothing. There is little fascination in the commerce of nations—there is no sensation in the world's work! Only when one of the leviathans shudders and disappears with its full complement of human victims, and the agony of a nation mourning for its dead comes to us like the wail of Atlantis across the water, do we heed. Then, mayhap, for a brief moment a

languid interest manifests itself; a few leading voices give it slight expression, a few pay their tribute of tears, and then oblivion! We forget too easily. The sensation of yesterday becomes the burden of to-day—the silence of to-morrow. Perhaps, after all, it is well it should be so, otherwise remembrance might prove a burden too heavy for the shoulders of the world.

But however this may be, certain it is that this meeting of the waters is intensely interesting to all who think and feel. To those who can see the world's great heart throbbing and panting at the estuary, who see the life of the world circulating in this great silver vein we call the Thames, which carries such a motley freight so lightly on its bosom, the sight is surely of the most commanding majesty.

Come with me to Gravesend, and let me show you pictures.

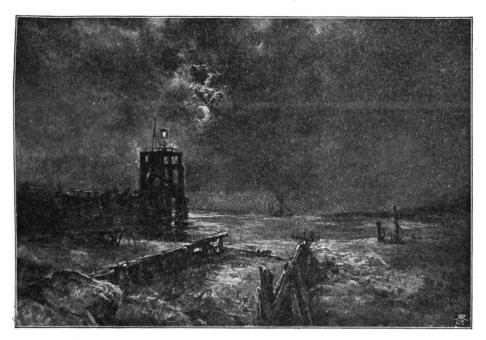
A narrow channel—scarcely half a mile across-with low-lying banks on either side, and great piers—huge structures of black oak, grimed by age and toughened by the salt which blows in from the open water, crossed and barred, and buttressed and trellised, standing high, and beaconed like a light-ship, these strange monsters rear their heads — grim sentinels! — as though to guard the shipping which day and night fills the reach. South from Northfleet, where the first lightship of the Trinity House throws its radiating beams across the water, sheer to Coal House Point, the current runs a straight three miles. Away on either hand, as far as the eye can reach, spars and masts and hulls are packed in heaped confusion. All sorts and conditions of ships and steamers, from all parts of the known world, going to, and coming from, all the corners of the earth! The stately ironclad, majestic with the dignity of brain and bone and muscle—a veritable British bull-dog. The splendid liners, fashioned in luxury, and framed in steel, strong, swift, and slender, worthy greyhounds of the ocean.

The screaming launch, dashing wildly down the stream, spurning the foam in curled cascades from its bows, for all the world like a terrier dashing through a snow The trim China clipper. The picturesque Dutch galliot. The puffing, snorting, swinging, evil-smelling'steam-tug, belching forth a mingled vomit of flame and oil-fouled smoke. The uncouth hav-The lighter, and the schooner, and the dumb barge, the latter always drifting helplessly across the river, with the solitary figure at the stern, straining and tugging at the long, ungainly oar which does duty Emigrant ships undergoing for a tiller. inspection by the emigration officers. Outward-bound vessels receiving their bills of Inward-bound ships taking on board the revenue officers and the river Here they are to be seen at all times and at all seasons, changing and interchanging the produce of nations. Do they not all bear eloquent testimony to the beat of the world's pulse?

The dreary little station at Tilbury is full of damp and fog, and the twilight deepens into night as the train grinds its way up to the wooden platform. An old-world porter is engaged in listlessly lighting the antediluvian lamps with a prehistoric torch, as the cramped passengers spread towards the gate. How dismal it all looks! The ill-lit station, forlorn and comfortless: the high barricades: the snorting engine, standing half buried in fog and smoke, panting out steam in short, hard gasps, as though its journey had left it breathless, just as we see a horse blowing his laboured breath through his nostrils on a frosty day after a hard run! Let us go through the gate, down the covered way to the Ferry Pier, whose black head, rising a sheer twenty feet in the air, carries its lantern bravely. Once out on the timbers, we get a first glimpse of the river, strong, dark, and sullen, swelling onwards to the grey-green water out there away beyond the mist. Night has now settled down in earnest, and-for here

the fog singularly enough has lifted—lights twinkle out across the black and shining water; lights, white, and red, and green, studding the dark horizon like jewels on the vestments of the dead. Far away to the right stretches the illimitable dreariness of the waste marshes, while to the left, through Gravesend reach with its muddy fringes, through the Lower Hope down the widening vista of Sea Reach, past the Chapman beacon, by the Gantlet flats.

strange unearthly scream as of a creature in pain. What has happened? Have the spirits of the Unappeased come from the limbo of the departed to tear the stout old timbers from their socket-beds and fling them broadcast? No. It is only the busy little steamer of the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway, with the three curious scimitars cut deep into her paddle-box, and a shower of sparks like a young Vesuvius soaring up from her



The ragged heads of the breakwaters assume rough shapes in the shadow.

the wind howls straight down the open road to the sea. Suddenly the moon, veiled and indistinct, swings out of a mass of breaking cloud and throws a band of crumpled silver from shore to shore. The ragged heads of the breakwaters assume rough shapes in the shadow, and the rotting hull of a disused lighter, bruised and broken, with the foul ooze of the river bed soaking into its forgotten timbers, comes slowly into sight—a strange commentary on the work of man! Hark! a grinding, ripping, tearing noise is heard, and the hoarse shouts of men and the

dusky funnel, crashing her troubled way to the pier-head, and crushing the fender flat as she rocks and sways and strains at her creaking hawsers in the stiff breeze. All aboard! All aboard! The little knot of shivering passengers crowd on to the boat; the wooden gangway is drawn rattling up; the steam whistle sends forth another vicious shout; the water, churned into foam, seethes and bubbles round the revolving blades, and we are heading for Gravesend. Leaning over the bow, with the keen air blowing hard into our faces, forcing the breath

back into our teeth, and somehow making the world seem better and larger, we stand gazing down at the rushing water, which seems slipping, slipping from under us. Ever and again as a more than usually turbulent roller meets the cutwater, a shower of spray springs to the winch-head, and the divided foam rolls away on either Ting, ting, ting-a-ting-ting! The captain is signalling to the engine-room. The Minnesota, with her freight of prairiefed cattle 'tween decks, and her fodder stowed amidships, fresh from her three thousand miles voyage across the "ditch," is coming up stream, and we slow down to pass under her counter. Away on our starboard bow the metallic bell of the Brazilian gun-boat, moored in the centre of the river, with her accompanying tenders, keeps up a monotonous dirge. This boat is one of a trio sent by the enterprising Government of Brazil to find a purchaser in John Bull, who, however, seems in no violent hurry to become possessed of these triumphant veterans of the Brazilian Navy.

Let us go into the deck-house which does duty for a cabin. The light streams across the deck from the oil-lamps suspended from the ceiling. We get no farther, however, than the window, for peering through the glass we become conscious of a strange sight. A motley crowd of men and loafers are busily engaged in encouraging two of their number, who, with coats off, and throats bare, are settling a slight dispute in the demonstrative manner dear to the hearts of longshoremen, when they have not to ioin in themselves. The two men face each other with heaving chests and swinging arms. Cattle-tenders, evidently, on their way from the docks. Big brawny fellows, inflamed with drink and passion, fighting fairly enough in their rough unscientific manner. The flail-like arms go round, and the blows fall like hail upon combatants and bystanders alike. Indeed one venturesome onlooker, craning his

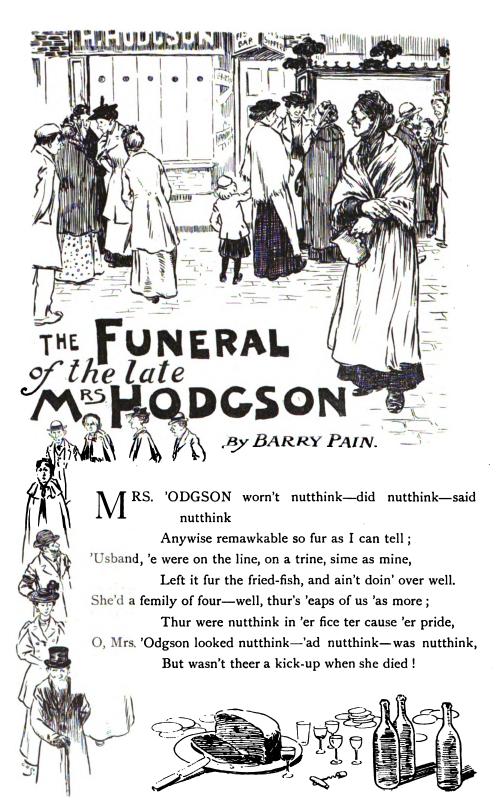
head too far forward in the excitement of the moment, receives the sledge-hammer fist full in the face, and is incontinently laid low by the blow intended for the lucky cattle-driver, who escapes it. The crowd sways backwards, and the butchers retire to their respective sides to glare at each other, and breathe out fearful slaughter and annihilation. Before they can come together again a diversion is occasioned by the boat bumping against Gravesend ferry pier, and the crowd rush helter-skelter out across the platform of rough timber. Up the steep steps they stream, yelling and hooting, as the two disputants, accompanied by their respective partisans, disappear into the darkness. We follow leisurely, and stand a moment watching the steamer sheer off to fetch the crew of that Norwegian brig in the reach. Long after she is swallowed up in the murky gloom which hangs about the centre of the river, the white spume hangs about the pier, rising and falling as the swell occasioned by her passage laps the boards. How wonderful it all is! The great towering pier-head, with its flickering lantern—a twin to Tilbury which only serves to accentuate the The inky river swirling at our shadows. feet, and rushing away into the great beyond. The long lights streaming across that great wilderness of water as though a deluge had washed the flame out of the lamp-heads and scattered them in yellow rivulets out of all proportion along That black arch yonder the flood. seems like the gaping mouth of Dante's Inferno: grim, silent, and full of unknown thoughts. How weird it looks. We slowly turn away, and in silence mount the steps.

The open space in front of the pier is thronged with a dense crowd of men, women, and children, pushing, shouting, swaying round something that is apparently affording them unlimited opportunity for jest and banter. The yellow light from the gin-shops which stand on either side streams over the closely

packed mass, which looks intensely black against the glare. Beyond, streaming down the steep High Street, which, with its lamps piled one on top of the other and its flaring gas jets, looks like a narrowing column of fire, comes a straggling procession of loafers, boatmen, and scantily-clad women, eager to join the crowd below and assist in the festivities which are evidently going forward. We shuffle our way through the press to a running accompaniment of imprecations and sarcastic enquiries as to whether we have any idea of our destination. blaze from the public-houses at first dazzles us, and we can only see the heads of the crowd; but as we become more accustomed to the violence of light and shade we discern the cause of the interest. The crowd gives a sudden lurch; the serried ranks part, and a man falls with a crash at our feet. Our friends of the ferry-boat have evidently not yet finished their argument, and the discussion is still in full swing. In the centre of the little hollow space stands the shorter of the two, his face black with mud and daubed with blood, his shirt hanging in ribbons, and his clenched hands swinging by his sides, crimson to the knuckles. Aha! The other man has risen to his feet, and dashing his arm across his blinded eyes, stands a moment blinking in the light. With a frightful oath he rushes on his fellow. The crowd yells with delight, a few frenzied passes, a wild clutch, and the two fall to the ground with a sickening thud. "Git up! git up!" is bawled from all sides. "Let 'em fight fair; don't 'it 'im down!" "Go it, Corbit!"—a dozen brawny pairs of arms are round the topmost figure, and he is torn, cursing his father and his mother, from his hold. A strange crowd this !--rough, drunken, and altogether disreputable, and yet with notions of "fair play!" Truly a curious people are we English. Insular even to the dregs!

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]





E'd 'is frien's in, ite or nine—did it fine—sherry wine,

Plite o' best mixed biscuits, and extrevygance in kike, Crorss come from 'er brother Willy—harum lily—knock yer silly,

Which fur 'arf-a-thick-un I'd bin sad ter 'ave ter mike.

An' the childring 'ad black mittings, an' the corfin plited fittings,

And a verse was on the mournin'-card surplied;



Mournin' coaches bein' wide, they cud ride six inside,

The earse 'ad plumes upon it, all were clawsy as cud be,

I watched 'er ridin' orf, like a torf—mide me corf

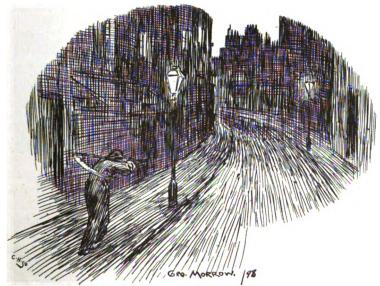
Ter think with all I'd done they never thought o' awskin' me!

Though I'd lent 'em things o' mine, sich as corkscrew fur the wine,

They'd gort too grand ter offer me a ride,

O, Mrs. 'Odgson looked nutthink—'ad nutthink—was nutthink,

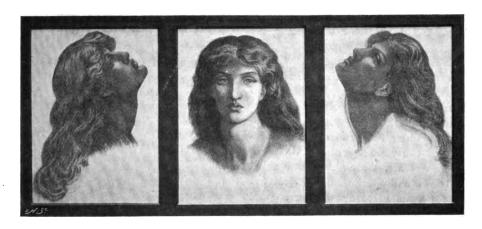
But she was the Queen o' Sheber when she died.





THE SALUTATION OF BEATRICE. FROM THE PICTURE BY DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

(Bv permission of Sir John C. Holder.)



Three pencil Studies of Heads. By D. G. Rossetti.

(By permission of the Lord Battersea.)

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF "THE GERM,"

BY ERNEST RADFORD.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PICTURES BY D. G. ROSSETŢI AT THE NEW GALLERY.

OR those who have already by heart, as it were, the letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, selected and edited by his excellent brother; the Autobiography of William Bell Scott, deceased; the Preferences of Henry Quilter, Esqre.; the articles on the same inexhaustible subject contributed to the Contemporary Review by W. Holman Hunt; the various lives of the painter-poet that were produced in hot haste between the date of his death and his funeral; and the more recent works of Ester Wood and Miss Proctor, it may appear, perhaps, that there is no very pressing need of more; but later than any, and infinitely more entertaining, is a delightful volume of letters addressed by the poet to one of his nearest and dearest friends, the late William Allingham. It was after they had been read that the writer, for the first time in his life, felt inclined to take

up his pen, and record in a general way his impressions of the man and the movement. But also for the first time he writes for THE IDLER, and must consider how much of what might be written is likely to prove entertaining. It would flatter the writer, would the reader imagine a well-stored cellar of wine and vessels of various sorts to be filled. They may be either too big or too small for the purpose; and, again, what is relished by some may be rudely rejected by others; and so may it fare with the scribe who is prompted to give of his abundance. Experience teaches, however, and I decide, speaking now for myself, that an article dealing exclusively with the life and death of The Germ, the respiratory organ of the Brethren, may be made interesting. The illustrations here produced are amongst the best of the paintings in the New Gallery. the figure representing Beatrice in the picture described as the "Salutation," there is nothing more beseechingly beautiful, perhaps, in the wide wide world of Art; but the creations of poet-painters should be allowed in a general way to speak for themselves, and I am little inclined at the moment to say much about pictures, even those which I myself have selected. When I would be reverential I dislike being critical, and there are many, I believe, who will understand and respect my feeling.

Mr. Quilter, above named, has said that the three Rossettis contributed as many as thirty-nine pieces to this periodical, and Mr. Walter Armstrong, that "of the seven brethren, no less than five had the pens of ready writers, so that from the first nothing could have been surer than that an organ of some kind would have been started. Of this same organ, The Germ, the four numbers have now become exceedingly scarce, and are worth, as money goes, their weight in gold." However this may be, I have had before me while writing this paper an exceptionally perfect copy which I have compared with the two in the British Museum, and am inclined even more than before to envy the owner.

In writing what follows I have the general reader in view, and not that very particular bookworm who will find nothing here that he knew not already. I may tell him, for instance, that "Laura Savage" and "John Seward" are one, and he will be able to say in reply that I have referred for this information to the copy which through the kindness of Mr. William Rossetti the nation possesses, wherein the names of the several contributors when they do not appear, or appear in disguise, are supplied by the giver.

Mr. Woolner, one of the seven, is said to have said that, looking back through the years to the days of his youth, he was inclined to regard the whole thing as a joke, and thereupon Mr. Quilter remarks that a joke, if it had been a poor one, would hardly have lasted so long—a

matter of fifty years now. If ever sorrow was genuine, it was the other day when our President died, and so it was in 1882 when Rossetti was laid to rest. It was not long after that these sweet, sad words were written, and signed by his sister Christina:—

BIRCHINGTON CHURCHYARD.

A lowly hill which overlooks a flat,
Half sea, half country-side,
A flat-shored sea of low-voiced creeping tide,
Over a chalky, weedy mat.
A hill of hillocks, flowing and kept green,
Round crosses raised for hope,
With many tinted sunsets where the slope
Faces the lingering western sheen.
A lowly hope, a height that is but low,
While Time sets solemnly,
While the tide rises of Eternity,
Silent, and neither fast nor slow.

The following is, I believe, a complete account of the contents of the numbers as they appeared in the first four months of the year 1850. In the third, the original title was altered, and "Art and Poetry" set in its place. "A clumsy substitute," says Mr. Armstrong, "suggested by J. L. Tupper, the printer." There were as many as three Mr. Tuppers, however, though a few more or less could not matter. It was G. F. who printed The Germ, and J. L. who contributed to it. We were told by Mr. Wm. Bell Scott of thirty-three pounds and some shillings that were due to G. F. when the paper expired, and I cannot help thinking it possible that an "outstanding debt" to one Tupper may account for the rubbish in prose and verse that poured from the pen of the other. A selection of J. L. Tupper's remains has lately been published, the copyright having expired, I suppose. Desiring as I do to speak of the gold which remains after sifting the dross, I prefer to forget the less important contributors.

A sonnet, by Mr. Wm. Rossetti, which graced the cover, was damned with faint praise by the hereinbefore mentioned Bell Scott. "When one has mastered

Dante Ros-

setti, and

Woolner.

Then fol-

lows the

table of con-

tents. Then

a wordabout

this production, though, indeed, it would seem to require a Browning Society's united intellects, it will be found to mean that the only desirable and vital workmanship is that which honestly and

directly expressed our own conceptions and observations, and this is the one excellence we find in all the works of the Brethren."

John Orchard, of whom I know nothing, contributed the first of a series of "Dialogues o n Art." which he intended to write, and died immediatelyafter.

Calder Campbell sent two little poems; William Bell Scott, one or two. Amongst things of no of "The Seasons," which is quoted below.

Collinson and Deverell complete the list of the lesser lights, and we come after all to the poems of Christina Rossetti,



The Blessed Damozel.

From the picture by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

(By kind permission of Mrs. O'Brien.)

lasting value must be reckoned almost all that was written in prose by Maddox Brown, William Rossetti, and F. G. Stephens. Mr. Coventry Patmore's entirely new view of "The Character of Macbeth" can scarcely be read to-day; but the same pen, it must be remembered, gave us the exquisite little poem

the Pre-Raphaelite Artas exhibited in a few etchings, and, finally, as much as space allows me to say of the literary art of the poet-painter FORD MADDOX Brown contributed to the first number, p. 10, a sonnet, "The Love of Beauty"; to the second, pp. 70-73, a paper upon

"The Me-

chanism of

a Historical

Picture.—Part I. The Design,"; to the third, an etched frontispiece illustrating "Cordelia," a poem by W. M. Rossetti.

CALDER CAMPBELL, to the second

number, p. 68, "Sonnet."

James Collinson, to the second number, an etched frontispiece illustrating his own poem "The Child Jesus," pp. 49-57.



Algernon C. Swinburne.

From the portrait by D. G. Rossetti.
(By permission of the Lord Battersea.)

W. H. DEVERELL, to the second number, p. 79, a sonnet sequence, "The Sight Beyond"; to the fourth, an etched frontispiece illustrating his own poem "Viola and Olivia," p.145; p. 177, poem, "A Modern Idyll."

HOLMAN HUNT, to the first number, etched frontispiece illustrating Woolner's poem, "My Beautiful Lady."

JOHN ORCHARD, to the fourth number, pp. 146-167, "A Dialogue on Art"; pp. 167-169, poem, "On a Whit-Sunday in the Month of May."

COVENTRY PATMORE, to the first number, p. 19, poem, "The Seasons"; to the second, p. 69, poem, "Stars and Moon"; to the third, pp. 99-110, prose essay, "Macbeth."

THE SEASONS.

The crocus, in the shrewd March morn,

Thrusts up his saffron spear;

And April dots the sombre thorn

With gems, and loveliest cheer.

Then sleep the seasons, full of might;

While slowly swells the pod,

And rounds the peach, and in the night

The mushroom bursts the sod.

The winter comes: the frozen rut

Is bound with silver bars.
The white drift heaps
against the hut,

And night is pierced with stars.

CHRISTINA Ros-SETTI (Ellen Alleyn) contributed seven poems. To the first number, p. 20, "Dream Land," and p. 48, "An End"; to the second number, p. 57, "A Pause of Thought";

p. 64, "A Song"; pp. 73-75, "A Testimony"; to the third, pp. 111-117, "Repining"; p. 117, "Sweet Death."

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, to the first number, pp. 21-22, a poem, "My Sister's Sleep"; pp. 23-33, a prose essay, "Hand and Soul"; to the second, pp. 80-83, "The Blessed Damozel"; to the third, p. 126, a poem, "The Carillon"; p. 129, a poem, "From the Cliffs—Noon"; to the fourth, pp. 176-7 (?); pp. 180-3, six sonnets for pictures.

WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI, to the title page, a sonnet which reappeared as often as the paper; to the first number, pp. 34-46, a review, "The Bothic of Toperna-fuosich," by Arthur Hugh Clough; p. 46, sonnet, "Her First Season"; to

the second, pp. 76-8, poems, "Fancies at Leisure"; pp. 84-96, a review, "The Strayed Reveller," and other poems by A; to the third, pp. 97-8, poem, "Cordelia"; pp. 129-30, "Fancies at Leisure" (a second instalment); pp. 137-44, "A Review"; to the fourth, pp. 173-6, poem, "To the Castle Ramparts"; p. 179, sonnet, "Jesus Wept"; pp. 187-92, a review, "Christmas Eve and Easter Day," by Robert Browning, 1850; p. 192, sonnet, "The Evil Under the Sun."

WM. BELL SCOTT, to the second number, pp. 65-8, poem, "Morning Sleep"; to the third, p. 128, sonnet, "Early Aspirations."

F. G. STEPHENS, to the second number, pp. 58-64, essay on "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art"; to the fourth, pp. 169-73, a prose essay, "Modern Giants."

J. L. TUPPER, to the first number, pp. 11-18, prose essay, "The Subject in Art. No. 1"; p. 47, poem, "A Sketch from Nature"; to the third, pp. 118-25, "The Subject in Art. No. 2"; pp. 131-6 "Papers of the MS. Society"; to the fourth, pp. 183-92, "Papers of the MS. Society" (a second instalment).

THOMAS WOOL-NER, to the first number, pp. 5-10, "My Beautiful Lady"; to the second, p. 75, poem, "Ah, When and Where."

The Pre-Raphaelites, I may say in conclusion, would have been wiser, as they knew little of etching, to have practised lithography, for it appears that a multiplied autograph was all they required. It is easy to imagine these hopeful, midcentury spirits discoursing amongst themselves of the matter, and promising death to the traitor-translator, with as much of a Christian's forbearance as the autoleographer exhibits to-day when the question of reproduction by photo-process arises.

Of these four etchings, the one by



"Joli Cœur."

From the picture by D. G. Rossetti.
(By permission of Miss A. E. F. Horniman.)

Holman Hunt was designed to illustrate the two parts of the poem "My Beautiful Lady," which Woolner contributed. There is passion, pure, pulsing, acceptable passion, in every verse of this beautiful work, as here it appears in its earliest and loveliest form. Piety of the simplest sort, confessed and unashamed, is the keynote of Woolner's poem, as it is of Pre-Raphaelite Art. The impulse of the truly religious, when the stirrings of love in the senses are felt, is straightway to kneel and confess to the Lord. Then smileth God on his children, that they may be glad, and the answer He gives comes never in words. There is nothing in modern verse with which this may be compared, for the religious of the decadent school are incapable of producing a thing so perfectly pure, and nothing of the kind is now written. It must have seemed at the time as if Love's last word had been spoken, but only a few years later, in praise of another most "beautiful lady," came Morris's silencing outburst of song:

"Beata mea Domina."

Rossetti's poems in this periodical should be compared with the same in the collected editions. The "Blessed Damozel" was actually written in 1847, when the poet was only nineteen. By 1856 it had been partly rewritten, and was printed again in the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine. It is fortunate for us that the grown man was the critic of his own youthful production, for none but the author himself could have made this particular work perfect, or could, in the same intimate manner, have been domiciled with it. In the earliest version the idea is the same, and much of the same magical music is there; but the verses are few that are not marred by something of sound or sense that strikes one at once as unfortunate, and whoever compares the two will find that the poem was almost entirely rewritten before the author desisted from working upon it.

the original he banished four verse entirely, and of those that remained, I think only two were allowed to stay as they were. The three that are new complete the poem as we have it to-day. Such wholesale omissions and liberal additions even the most careless of readers will quickly discover. It is the slighter and tenderer touches of Art which discover the master. Sometimes the change is effected by merely preferring one stop to another. As I have been pleasantly occupied in collating the different versions, I would, if allowed, have reprinted the poem in a manner intended to show through what stages it passed, but being fairly long, as it is, this could not have been done within the limits prescribed.

In any discussion as to the artistic and literary quality of their productions, the ages of the several contributors should be taken into account, and we should consider also the external intellectual influences to which they were subject. The spirit of the age, so far as it can be discovered in poetry, found fullest expression in the writings of Browning, then new to the public, of Matthew Arnold, and Arthur Hugh Clough; and William Michael Rossetti, as editor, was the fortunate recipient of volumes of poems by each of these writers. It is interesting to find Morris in the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine (1856) stoutly defending the author of "Sordello" against a charge of obscurity. "If anyone's head was muddled, it was the critic's," he said. "Sordello" was published in the "Bothic" in 1848. To realise how closely related in spirit were the authors of these two volumes we have only to imagine Browning at Oxford, and "Sordello" done into hexameters. "Bothic" reads like a more or less serious attempt on the part of the younger man to demonstrate that a poem may be modern in spirit, and yet not grotesquely amorphous. Ruskin, who appeared as

the champion of the movement after the poor little Germ had expired, was born in 1819; Millais and Holman Hunt in 1829; the three Rossettis in three succeeding years; Christina, the eldest, in Considering, then, the youth of the several contributors, it is marvellous that so much is so good. It will be generally admitted, I think, that the etchings they published were about as bad, considered merely as etchings, as such things can possibly be. Until its comparatively recent revival in England, etching, as an independent art, was neither extensively practised nor generally understood, and the Brethren, when they betook themselves to it, must have regarded it merely as a means to an end. The idea, un-

doubtedly, was to evade the engraver—the detestable middleman—and appeal to the public directly. An exceedingly limited public it proved. The only one of the number from whom something good of its kind might have been obtained was Millais, who never practised an art without mastering it, and he, it is said, etched one plate in illustration of a poem in prose by Rossetti, which was to have graced the fifth number. It is mournful to have to reflect upon what we have possibly lost. Is it idle to hope, I wonder, that the story and the illustration may be recovered and published together? What might have been in number five of The Germ? Is there no one alive who can tell us? Some more padding by J. L. Tupper, perhaps.



Mrs. Vernon Lushington.

From the portrait by D. G. Rossetti.

(By permission of His Honour Judge Lushington.)

NICOLETTE.

BY CHARLES KENNETT BURROW.

ILLUSTRATED BY S. H. VEDDER.

T was a still evening and warm, and Nicolette sat just inside the doorway with her work. Behind her, in the dark interior of the cottage, the little old mother sat crouching over a tiny fire; the little old mother was always cold now; even on the hottest day or summer she wore the heavy shawl that Antoine had bought her just before he died. Now and then Nicolette paused in her work to look across the tiny cultivated fields close at hand, and beyond them over the rough, sandy dunes to where the hard Brittany coast sheered down into the sea. The sea was very quiet to-night; it only whispered a little to itself, and sluiced pleasantly against the rocks; it seemed altogether like a friend, full of kindness and goodwill; but Nicolette knew it for a slayer of men.

The old mother raised her head and called: "Art thou not cold, Nicolette?"
To which Nicolette answered:

"No, little mother. There is no wind, and the sun has hardly set."

"There may be wind to-morrow."

"Yes," said the girl, "one never knows. It must be hard for the men at sea, and many of them leave to-morrow." She laid her work in her lap, and sat idly



Nicolette sat just inside the doorway.

thinking. The sea went on talking to itself, and Nicolette's thoughts set themselves to the slow music. Her beautiful brown hair was hidden under a white cap, and under the brown hair her brain was very busy with a girl's thoughts. Her life of steady labour had left her little time for dreaming, but when the evening was mild and she sat in the open air with her work, she often found that her fingers dropped the needle and her thoughts flew off like birds suddenly released.

Presently a footstep sounded on the road. Nicolette heard it and hurriedly picked up her work. The old mother heard it too, and called: "That is Pierre. Remember what I told thee, child." Then she crouched over the fire again, holding out her wrinkled brown hands into the smoke.

Pierre Carrère swung up to the door and stopped. "Good evening, Nicolette," he said.

"Good evening, Pierre," she answered. He leaned against the doorway and looked down at her. He saw the colour rise to her cheek, and smiled to himself as he glanced within. When he saw the little mother he frowned and turned his back.

Pierre was tall and very dark. His great limbs were loosely hung together, so that when he walked every joint and muscle seemed to move. His face was as brown as seaweed, his hair and beard as black as a cormorant. His eyes glowed with slumbering fire, always ready to blaze out in anger or pleasure; they were undisciplined eyes, but full of will. After a long silence he said:

"Hast thou nothing to say to me, Nicolette? Thou knowest I sail to-morrow."

"I wish thee a good voyage—and a speedy return," she added.

"No more than that?" he asked.

"And much wealth, and happiness all thy life."

He laughed and looked across towards

the coast. "The sea brings no wealth to us," he said. "It may bring us death."

The little mother stirred in her chair and laid one hand against her cheek. She was straining to hear every word. "Yes, it brings us death," she thought.

"Yet thou lov'st the sea," said Nicolette.

"Yes, I love it," said Pierre, "because it is strong, because it will have its way." Then he dropped his voice so that the little mother had to strain her old ears to catch what he said.

"But hast thou no more to say to me, Nicolette?"

She looked up at him with steady eyes, and laid one hand across her breast. "No more, Pierre," she said, "until thou com'st back." He had an oath upon his lips, but held it in check.

"But suppose I never come back at all?"

"Then," she said, "it were better that we were not betrothed." She spoke with an agony in her voice that both Pierre and the little mother understood.

"But if we are betrothed," he cried, "I will come back to thee, Nicolette, I must come back to thee. Oh, Nicolette, let me go happy. All the others leave wives or sweethearts, even little Monet is betrothed; why should I alone, who might have a hundred girls, have none?" Nicolette bowed her head; the tears came slowly and fell upon her lap. Her heart was sick for love of Pierre, and she longed to rise up and cast her arms about him; but she was loyal to the will of the little mother and sat still.

"Thou knowest I love thee," she said, "thou knowest I love thee, but I must obey the little mother, who is always right. Soon she may give me to thee, but not yet."

The little mother was thinking of what the sea had taken from her, and kept repeating to herself, "It brings us death, it brings us death." She was hardly conscious of the voices now. Pierre was suddenly flooded with generosity and love and tenderness. He stooped down quickly in the dusk and whispered, "It is well, Nicolette. I will go away and come back to claim thee. It will not be long. Good-night, little one. In the morning I shall see thee." He kissed her forehead, and then went quickly up the road.

Nicolette sat there for a long time, wondering in her simple way at the bitterness of partings; wondering why lovers could not be always hand in hand; wondering why the little mother had forbidden her to become betrothed to Pierre. She knew that he was wild, but not half so wild as people said, she thought. And even if it were all true, who could lead him as she could? When she went in the little mother was asleep, and the fire had dwindled to a single spark. Nicolette laid a hand upon her shoulder, and the old woman awoke with a shiver.

"'Tis very cold, Nicolette," she said. "Has Pierre gone?"

"Yes," said Nicolette.

"Thou wast brave Nicolette. I know how hard it is to say a man nay—I know, I know. When he comes from this voyage, and if he is well spoken of, he shall have thee, Nicolette. And he was not angry—no? . . . 'It may bring us death,' he said." The little mother nodded over the grey ashes, and would have slept again, but Nicolette roused her, and led her to the little room, whose window looked over the rough cliff paths. It was almost dark before she was in bed, but no candle was lighted. On that coast people do not use candles save at weddings and funerals.

Nicolette lay awake in her narrow bed long after the little mother was asleep; the sea-murmur still came to her, now a little louder than before, for the wind had risen and was blowing from the coast; every now and then, too, she heard voices in the village, loud voices, that rose and fell gustily. But she took no heed of

these; she only thought of Pierre Carrère, and of how she loved him; that was enough to fill her mind quite full. When he came back, the little mother had said, they should be betrothed. She saw herself walking to the old grey church, she heard the girls whispering together, she saw the men nudge each other and smile, saying, "My faith, what a pretty bride Pierre has got." She even saw the light before the altar, and felt Père Guilbert's hand upon her head. And just as the first notes of the organ sounded she, too, fell asleep.

In the meantime Pierre had gone back to the village. There is only one long street in Cantenac, with grey stone houses on either hand. Just under the shadow of the church, so close that it trembles with the shock of the bells, is the Café de Bretagne. Carrère was full of pleasant and tender thoughts as he reached the door; he paused a moment, undecided whether to pass or go in. He heard name mentioned: "Where Pierre Carrère?" He pushed the door open and entered. "He is here," he said.

The room was full of smoke, through which the single hanging lamp shone like a low moon through autumn mist; the small square table was crowded with glasses. Round the table and on benches set against the walls sat a dozen men, some in blue blouses, others in rough homespun cloth. In one corner two silent players were intent on a game of The rest talked altogether. Everyone was there—Brun, who drove the St. Brieuc diligence, fierce and freckled; Poulade, mate of the St. Marie; Jean Périgaud, heavy and grim; even little Monet, whose blue eyes, bright with absinthe, were full of satisfaction that he had won little Eugénie, old Poussin's girl. As Pierre entered he was greeted with a shout, a glass was filled for him, and he sat down by Monet.

"Where hast thou been, Pierre?" asked

Monet. "We have expected thee for this hour and more."

"I have been attending to business." A general laugh greeted this.

"With whom was thy business?" asked Périgaud, his one eye maliciously watching Pierre's face.

"What is that to thee?" asked Pierre, drinking.

Périgaud raised his shoulders.

"There is no need to ask," he said.
"One always knows where to find Pierre
Carrère."

"One always knows where to find thee, at least," said Pierre, hotly. "Here, where drink is cheap for those who do not care to pay."

"Be quiet, Pierre," said Monet. "Périgaud is in an evil mood to-night."

"What do I care?" cried Pierre. "Let him mind his own affairs. Friends, let us fill again. To-morrow we shall part." His gentle mood was passing; the face of Nicolette was fading as the spirit mounted to his head; he cast a look of scorn at Périgaud across the table, which Périgaud answered with a leer from his one eye.

The talk grew louder; Monet alone was silent. He sat quite still after a time, watching Pierre. Pierre was his hero, a man to worship. If it had not been for Pierre he would never have had the courage to speak to Eugénie. Monet felt it to be his duty to protect his friend; how he was going to do it, being small and not over strong, he did not know; but, where girls were not concerned, he had the blind courage of a dog. He therefore watched Pierre and left his glass untouched.

Half an hour later Poulade innocently proposed that they should drink to their wives and sweethearts, whom some of them might never see again. Monet saw Pierre's face redden. Every man had his name ready until it came to Pierre's turn. He hesitated, and was about to let it pass when he saw the sardonic eye of Périgaud gleaming through the smoke. At once

he raised his glass and cried "Nicolette Drouat." Monet touched him on the knee, "That is well," he said. "I am glad."

"Nicolette!" said Périgaud. "Since when have you been betrothed?"

"What is that to thee?" cried

"I ask a question," insisted Périgaud. "Since when have you been betrothed?"

"And I ask a question," shouted Pierre, rising. "Where is the brat that Julie bore thee two years ago?" Périgaud grew as white as a leper for an instant; it was commonly believed that he had made away with the child, although no actual proof had been discovered. The other men in the room rose unsteadily altogether and waited, winking at each other. Monet alone was anxious to see the quarrel peaceably ended.

Périgaud recovered himself laughed, a hard laugh with fear "The child died," he said. behind it. And then he broke into a fury, and cried, "Thou art not betrothed Nicolette Drouat. She will never have thee." Pierre never lied, not from any moral compunction, but because he considered it the vice of a child.

"I am not betrothed," he said; "but when I come back she has promised."

"She said it to get rid of thee. She will never have thee," cried Périgaud again.

"Thou liest," said Pierre. The other leant across and struck Pierre on the mouth. In a moment Pierre had thrown Monet aside, and the two men had closed. It was a bitter fight, but short, for Pierre slipped in a pool of spilt liquor and fell. Périgaud kicked him twice as he lay, once on the cheek and once on the hand. Then he was secured and held back by half-adozen of the audience, who spat upon the ground and called him coward. Pierre rose with blood running from his

face; a finger of his left hand was broken.

"Jean Périgaud," he said, quietly, "thou art a liar and coward. I swear to make thee ache for this, so help me God." He made the sign of the cross upon his breast. "Go where thou wilt, I shall follow thee. It shall be a fair fight between thee and me."

Monet was tying up the broken finger with his scarf, thankful that matters were no worse. He took little heed of Pierre's threat, but Jean Périgaud, panting against the wall, grew pale again.

Soon after the Café de Bretagne was deserted, and the lights were out. The combatants were seen to their own homes for fear the fight might be renewed; but Pierre went peaceably with Monet, talking pleasantly the while of the voyage they were to make together, and of the prettiness of Eugénie and of the beauty of Nicolette.

"When we come back," he said, "there will be two weddings, both on the same date, my Monet."

"Yes, yes," said Monet. "Does the finger hurt?"

"It is nothing," said Pierre.

The morning rose clear with a northwest wind. The quay was crowded with women, some weeping, others pale and tremulous. Eugénie and Nicolette stood together.

"It is hard," said Eugénie, "to be lest alone."

"Yes," said Nicolette, looking at the black rigging of Pierre's ship. "But they will return, Eugénie."

"Yes," said Eugénie, smiling through her tears, "they will return. Poor Eugénie!"

Then the men came hurriedly swarming down, anxious to make the parting brief. Eugénie clung round little Monet's neck; Pierre and Nicolette stood hand in hand for a moment.

"Thou hast been hurt?" cried Nicolette, touching the bandaged finger fearfully.

"It is nothing," said Pierre. "When I come back, Nicolette, thou wilt keep thy promise?"

" Yes," she said.

"And if the little mother says nay?"
"She will not say nay—Good-bye

"She will not say nay—Good-bye, Pierre."

"Good-bye, Nicolette." He kissed her once and was gone, Monet with him. Then, as the women watched, the white canvas was shaken out, and presently two ships went dipping and bowing towards the unknown sea.

Nicolette went slowly back to the little mother, and watched from the window of her white-walled room until the ships were out of sight. Then she turned to the daily round again and waited, with the love of Pierre in her heart to keep her warm, and Pierre's last kiss always upon her lips.

The weeks slipped slowly by and autumn came. At last there were letters, and one from Pierre to Nicolette. He was well, he said, and always loved her. But there was bad news, too, for Monet was drowned. It had happened in a heavy storm, in which Pierre was washed overboard. Monet, always faithful, because Pierre had helped to give him Eugénie, had tried to save him. His body was picked up two hours later. Pierre himself was saved. Would Nicolette take the news to Eugénie and comfort her?

So Nicolette walked sadly through grey Cantenac to where Eugénie lived in a cottage just at the hill's foot, the hill which was crowned by the granite crucifix. And there, with the girl's head on her breast, Nicolette told her how her lover had died for his friend. Eugénie listened and wept. She had only that day been sewing white linen for the wedding; that must be put away, there was no need for it now. Nicolette wept with her, for although Pierre was alive she was not quite happy about him. She had heard the history of his quarrel with Jean Périgaud, and she was afraid

that there would be trouble when he returned.

But Pierre did not return. His ship came back to Cantenac, and Nicolette was waiting on the quay—but Pierre was not on board. He had left them at a distant port, they said; he had given only the one message for Nicolette, and that was scrawled across a scrap of ragged paper—the one word "wait." There was nothing more.

Nicolette, therefore, went home and waited. She made no doubt that some day Pierre would return, and she always had ready the gown which became her best. He might come at any hour, one never knew. Had not Jeanne Grasse's sweetheart come back and found her ankle-deep in mud in the cattle-pen? She would not like Pierre to find her so.

When winter came Nicolette's hands were very full. The little mother fell ill: she took to her bed and lay there, thinking and thinking, and talking and talking, all day long, and always about the same thing-always about those whom the sea had taken from her. She would call them, all three, by name, her husband and two sons; but most of all she called for Antoine, whose shawl she kept crossed over her old withered breast. It gave more warmth, she said, than twenty blankets; it was like a fire at her heart. But when the cold grew greater and the wind blew steadily from the east even Antoine's shawl could not keep the little mother warm. She became more and more wrinkled, more and more unwilling to let Nicolette's hand out of her failing If the girl went downstairs to see to household matters for a moment, the little mother's thin voice soon called after her, "Nicolette," and Nicolette would run up to her again, and draw the shawl more closely about the bony shoulders and sit down to watch.

At last there came a night when the little mother sat up in bed and called, as usual, for Nicolette. But when the white-

robed Nicolette stood by her she did not see the girl. She was whispering rapidly that she wanted Antoine; if he would not come she must set out to find him. What had they done with Antoine? Then her dim eyes suddenly brightened and she stretched out her arms. Nicolette took the little mother to her breast and soothed her; and the little mother thought it was Antoine that spoke so tenderly, and in that happy fancy she fell asleep.

She was buried in the graveyard near the edge of the cliff. The quiet populace about the church had filled up all the room for the dead in Cantenac, so a piece of ground had been consecrated right up on the hill, in full sight of passing vessels, and over which every wind under heaven blew.

Nicolette, for Cantenac, had become rich! The little mother had hoarded money, sou by sou, until the francs reached a good round sum. It was all left for Nicolette. But it made no difference to her life; money was of little use to her. When Pierre came back it would be different.

In the summer, to everyone's surprise but no one's sorrow, Jean Périgaud died. He lest nothing behind him but an evil name. Before he died he made a confession to Père Guilbert which made the good sather look grave for many days. People conjectured that it was about Julie's child, but no soul in Cantenac ever knew.

That autumn a little packet came for Nicolette. It bore the post-mark of a place of which she had never heard, and contained a curious gold ring. There was also a slip of paper in the packet, across which was written, "Wait, Nicolette. I will come soon.—Pierre."

Nicolette put the ring upon her finger, kissed it, and waited. Month after month passed but no other message came from Pierre. The good people of Cantenac said, "Nicolette will never marry. That fellow Carrère has deserted her; she

might have guessed it from the first. He was too wild to settle down. What a pity, and Nicolette so pretty and rich; what a wife for our son!" But Nicolette would listen to no wooers; she knew Pierre better than they did; he had told her to wait. And after all it was not hard for a girl of twenty-one to wait a little. People wondered that she kept her beauty; but it was not difficult for Nicolette to keep her beauty for Pierre.

Thus two years had passed—to Nicolette, two long, long years. As she sat in her favourite place by the doorway one pleasant evening she wondered how much longer she would have to wait. She was not angry with Pierre, only a little tired. When he came all the waiting would be forgotten.

A strange figure slouched up the street of Cantenac, a man bent and ragged, who dragged his feet wearily and kept his eyes bent upon the ground. A foreign ship had come to Cantenac that day, and the one or two loungers about the Café de Bretagne supposed he had been turned adrift from her. One of them said, "He is a little like Pierre Carrère," to which another replied, "That Pierre Carrère! You are dreaming." The bowed figure passed slowly out of sight.

Nicolette had allowed her work to fall into her lap again as she gazed straight before her and thought of Pierre. When she heard a footstep she picked it up hurriedly and looked to see who was coming. A bent and ragged figure approached. "Poor soul," she thought, "he is tired; I will offer him some milk." But as she rose to bring it the traveller raised his eyes. For a moment Nicolette stood as one suddenly struck dumb with fear, breathless, her eyes wide with questioning. Then she sprang forward with a cry in which the sealed passion of two years found voice.

"Pierre!"

He caught her in his arms, and with a voice as passionate, sobbed:

"Nicolette!"

She led him to the house, stroking and kissing his hand as she went. Her heart sang for joy. What did it matter to her in what guise he came? This was Pierre, this was her lover.

She wished to put him in the chair which had been the little mother's, but he refused to sit. He stood before her in the garb of a beggar.

"I have come back to thee, Nicolette, but see how I have come."

"Thou art Pierre," she cried, joyfully.
"I am rich, Pierre, rich! Hear me!
Thou shalt have all. I have kept all for thee." She laughed and clapped her hands like a child.

The bowed figure raised itself; the old Pierre looked at her in the old conquering way; the two years vanished like a breath.

"I came to thee thus," he said, "to see if thou wert still true to me, Nicolette." He began feverishly to cast the rags from him, she watching in blank amazement. In a moment he stood before her free of all disguise, upright, handsome, well clad; but in his face there was a gentleness she had never seen before, a gentleness born of two years of waiting in faith and hope.

"I, too, am rich," he said. A cloud passed across her face, but in an instant it vanished.

"I had rather thou hadst been poor," she said, "that I might have given thee all."

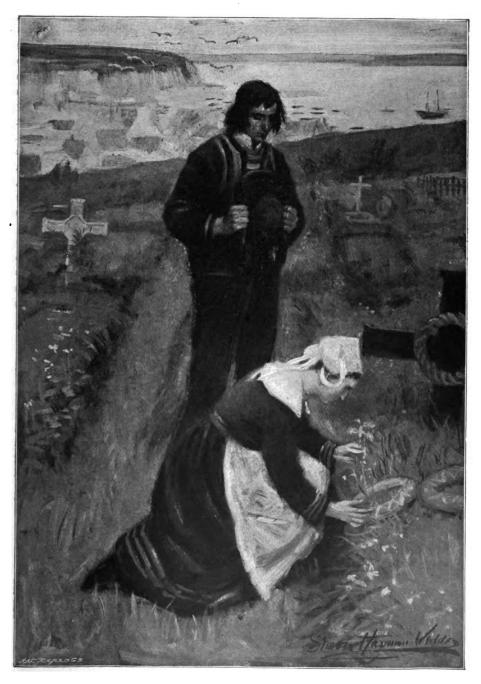
"Little one," he said, "thou givest me too much. Where is the little mother?"

"With the good God," she said. Pierre crossed himself.

"And Périgaud, he who did this?" He held out a crooked finger. "I swore to be revenged."

"Dost thou still wish for revenge? Canst thou not leave that to God?"

"I swore by His name," Pierre answered.



They entered the graveyard very quietly.

"I will show thee where to find him," said Nicolette.

It was dusk when they set forth together. The air was very soft, the western sky barred with streaks of topaz and amethyst. Before them the church rose, grey and austere; just over its roof could be seen the straight lines of the granite crucifix. Nicolette walked in a dream; the reward of waiting seemed like gold for dross; her woman's heart was so full that her woman's tongue was dumb with happiness. One thing only remained to be done.

"Where art thou taking me?" Pierre asked.

"To see the little mother's grave," answered Nicolette. Pierre bowed his head and went on. They mounted the hill slowly, hand in hand. They entered the graveyard very quietly, and stood for a time looking down at the sea, now grey

and still in the first hush of approaching night. "Poor Monet," said Pierre, "he died to save me."

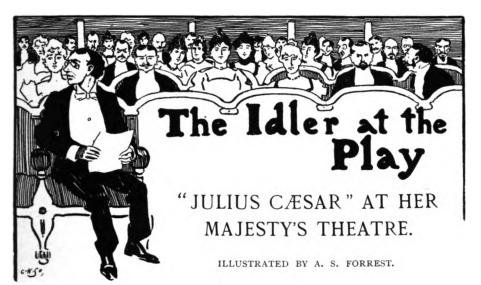
Then Nicolette led him to where the little mother slept. The grass was carefully tended and some fresh flowers lay upon the mound. The wind had disarranged them, and Nicolette knelt down to put them right. Pierre watched her with hungry eyes.

"The little mother sleeps well," she said. She rose and led Pierre, wondering, to another grave, untended, and with the coarse grass rank upon it.

"Jean Périgaud," she said, "rests here. He died a year ago."

Pierre stared upon the place for a long time without speaking. At first the old wild nature of the man rebelled against the balking of his vengeance. But when he felt Nicolette's lips against his cheek his anger died down for ever.





T was a starless night, and cold, when I turned up the Haymarket. seemed to me that snow was threatening, a bitter wind blew from the east, and people hurried along the pavement to keep the blood stirring. Those who had coats turned the collars up, those who had none shivered; I, fortunately, was well cased against the cold, but even I shivered—I suppose out of universal sympathy. Never mind, thought I, presently I shall be in Rome. I shall see the sunshine on the Capitol, I shall see the warm light on the columns of the Temple of Saturn, I shall be with Cæsar in the Senate House. and forget, for an hour, that London, on such a night, is the most wretched city in the world.

These reflections culminated as I crossed the road, and my life was like to have been ended at the same moment, for I escaped a whirling hansom as by a miracle, and bumped into a young man who stood on the kerb.

- "Great Scott!" he cried.
- "A thousand pardons," said I, "but you should say 'Great Cæsar.'"

- "I suppose so," he said, and glanced into the lighted vestibule behind him. "I think," he added, "that I'll go in."
- "Do," said I, "you'll find it warmer inside."
- "And safer, too," he said, smiling on me good-naturedly. He was a confidentlooking youth, with an air of alertness about him that pleased me. He carried a stick with silver knobs all over the handle.
- "As for safety," said I, "there's no such thing in the world, and if there were you certainly would not find it on the kerb."
- "I believe you," he answered. Then he nodded to me and went round to the pit door.
- I walked in just as the fiddles were tuning, and having made myself quite comfortable in my seat, I looked about me. It was not the first night of the play, but the sixth (I always put things off as long as possible in order to tilt against the proverb, which I hate), and there were no particularly distinguished people present so far as I could discover—none of those who make or those who administer laws,

or who write books or make plays, or give huge donations to hospitals. I was glad of this, for your distinguished person is not interesting to watch, and even to his friends he often presents a mask and not himself.

Well, I looked about me, and presently my glance fell upon a pair who took me greatly—an oldish man and a girl. The man was grey, his hair parted at the back, his eyebrows brushed so carefully that the individual hairs seemed to stand clear. His face was lined with experience of the



world,-you would say of him that he had "lived," and not been too particular as to where he found himself. In his mouth I read pride, self-gratification, and also a certain dignity and self-respect that thought must have battled hard for life; in his eyes was a kind of restlessness that seemed to come of the backward and not the forward glance. The girl was young, just in the breaking-blossom stage of youth, quick to take impressions, but almost afraid to see too much. that she must have lived mainly in the I could, as it were, see the reminiscent play of breezes in her hair, and her cheeks were not touched with the flush of town blood. The man of experience, whom I took to be her father, had evidently chosen to keep her unspotted from the world of which he knew so much. I could not see her eyes, which worried me, but so much of her mouth as I could catch was at once sweetly proud and gentle. She wore her shoulders, as it were, with a winsome modesty, as though to say, "If I am beautiful, blame me not for that; but am I beautiful?"

But the play? My good sir, the play will come presently. All in good time. I am a leisurely person, and love an audience as much as a play. Besides, is not a living girl as good as dead Cæsar? What is Rome to you compared with Putney, or wherever you live?

I looked round at the pit. My friend of the kerb was standing at the back; we exchanged nods, and then the overture commenced. And here let me say that the music composed for this production of *Julius Casar* by Mr. Raymond Roze is distinctly good; it is not ambitious, but it is always adequate and never degenerates into mere feeble tunefulness.

At last we are in Rome, the Rome of Mr. ALMA TADEMA, and every detail in it is wonderfully designed and most lavishly produced. As a mere stage spectacle Julius Cæsar is beyond praise; it moves and glitters with extraordinary verisimilitude The public street, the great interior of Cæsar's house, Brutus' orchard with its cypress grove, the alluring distant visions of the hills of Rome, the Forum, and the stretching plains of Philippi, all make a convincing background to this drama of patriotism, intrigue, conspiracy, veiled ambition, and inconstant mobs. You see, in these very splendours, the beginning of the decline of Republican, and the incoming of Imperial, Rome, and I think it was wise that this should have been insisted upon rather more than was probably perfectly justified by fact. In such a play no point should be lost, for it must be confessed that Julius Cæsar is not quite strong enough in motive to the average playgoer, and insistence upon any illuminating detail is a clear gain.

The mob, which plays so important a part in *Julius Cæsar*, as it were, the pulse of the play, is the best stage mob I ever saw. Like most crowds it is instant in approval and condemnation, as wax under the hands of a skilful orator. It sways and surges with a most unusual conviction, and it actually watches the occur-

rences on the stage and listens to Brutus and Antonius in the Forum instead of looking at the audience. This is an almost unique achievement in stage management—to guide eyes as well as limbs.

The entrance of Cæsar is preceded by a rabble of delightful shouting and jostling brown Roman boys. I loved those boys; they would have scrambled for coins, just as our own city urchins do on Lord Mayor's Day. What did they care for Cæsar and what do our young gamins care for the Lord Mayor? I saw the girl liked them, too, for she laughed softly as they ran on.

I wondered what the lady in the balcony on the

right of the stage was doing, but when Cæsar, turning from the Soothsayer, moves on with "He is a dreamer; let us leave him; pass," I understood and applauded a very well inspired piece of business. As he swept beneath her she cast down blood-red rose-petals before him, and as Cæsar and Antonius start at the unexpected shower, and Antonius suddenly glances upward, one realises that the woman is Antonius' mistress, and the compliment he had designed for his friend fore-

shadows the end of the conspiracy of blood.

In the conversation between Brutus (MR. Lewis Waller) and Cassius (MR. McLeay), which follows Cæsar's exit, MR. Waller strikes, I think, a wrong note, which he maintains throughout. His Brutus is too weak, too apt to be led only, too much of the melancholy introspective dreamer, and a great deal too much

of the poseur. He should be a man of plain honesty, who, once convinced, goes straight to his end. MR. WALLER is a modern from first to last, save in the oration in the second act, where he rises to a height which I was not prepared for, and which served to dwarf the rest of his performance still more. He has an admirable voice. but he does not use it well in blank verse: it has too few inflections; it rolls on melodiously enough, but makes no proper use of the glorious variety and gradation of Shakespeare's line. On the other hand, MR. WALLER has an admirable presence also, but that he uses far too much.

The Cassius of Mr. Mc-LEAY has many good

points — it is, in a measure, subtle; always, I think, intelligent and clear; but it suffers from over-emphasis, both of voice and gesture. He indulges in terrific pauses, occasionally delivering unimportant lines with such stress and fervour that I wondered what secret meaning he imagined to lie in them; and again, where he should have been tender, he was only emphatic. I am judging by a high, perhaps an ideal, standard, but I imagine this production of Julius Casar to aim at no less.



Mark Antony. (Mr. Beerbohm Tree.)

For the Casca of Mr. Louis Calvert I have nothing but praise—it is admirable. His narration of the episode of the offering of the crown to Cæsar is as well executed as it is characteristically conceived.

I suppose managers have been rather shy of Julius Casar because the love interest is so small, and also because the two women's parts in it must be really well played to be effective. Shakespeare, indeed, presents a most difficult problem to the manager, for almost any part is good enough for a good actor who cares about his art, and the great parts require great actors. Mr. Tree's wisdom in casting MISS EVELYN MILLARD for Portia and Miss Lily Hanbury for Calpurnia shines clear; he might have assigned these comparatively small parts to ladies who would have been graceful only, or pretty, or merely weak, and he would probably not have been greatly blamed; but the value of the acting of MISS MILLARD and MISS HANBURY in their two short scenes can hardly be over-estimated. In this drama of conspiracy and blood, of large import and wide sweep, these two women shine with the lustre of a single human Portia, wife to love—gems set in jet. Brutus, is not one of the greatest of Shakespeare's women, yet she glows with such truth and tenderness as make the After the clamour of the eyes burn. earlier scene, and the withdrawal of the conspirators from the orchard, it was a physical relief to hear a woman's voice, and the words "Brutus, my lord!" put me in tune with simple things again. The pride of Portia, added to the passion of her love, is beautiful:

> Dwell I but in the suburbs Of your good pleasure? If it be no more, Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife.

And again, delivered by MISS MILLARD with refreshing music and conviction:

I grant I am a woman, but withal A woman that Lord Brutus took to wife:

I grant I am a woman, but withal A woman well reputed, Cato's daughter. Think you I am no stronger than my sex, Being so father'd and so husbanded?

Within the limits of the part, I have never seen MISS MILLARD play better.

As Portia went slowly out I looked at the girl who had so interested me, and at that moment she turned and I saw her eyes; there were tears in them. Ah! thought I, you will make a faithful Portia to some happier Brutus, and, thank heaven, it will be upon a narrower stage. And immediately I considered that it would please me to play that other Brutus very well.

MISS HANBURY, as Calpurnia, expressed very finely the horror of the portents that hung above or walked the streets of Rome. Her elocution is singularly clear and decided, and I pay her the highest compliment I can think of when I say that she looked worthy to be the wife of the real Cæsar. It seemed to me that she rather dwarfed MR. CHARLES FULTON, whose Cæsar strikes me as too heavy, not alert enough; this is not the man, one thought, who "brought many captives home to Rome." He is dignified, but no more; I admit that that is something, but I contend that it is not enough.

The scene in the Senate House is admirable, and it is here that Mr. Tree's real work begins. His silent entry and approach to the body of the dead Cæsar. his shrinking from contact with the mur derers, his cautious watching of their faces, are all alike finely conceived. I confess that I was a little doubtful as to whether MR. TREE could do justice to Mark Antony; I was afraid that his voice had not variety enough, I trembled lest he might take the passion on too high a note; but, thinking over his whole performance quietly, I find that I can only praise it, and such faults as there were it would be ungenerous to make much of. That he should risk so much on a production that can hardly be popular in our modern sense

should win him the gratitude of all lovers of his art; he deserves success, and this should command it.

The pathos of his lament over the body moved me deeply; his fine scorn in the cry "I doubt not of your wisdom," and his sudden enforced calmness as he takes, with a shiver of horror, the bloody hands of the murderers one by one, clearly visualised the inner working of that acute mind. The soliloquy over the body was a little too violent to my thinking, culminat-

ing, as it did, in a fierce crescendo at the line "Cry, 'Havoc,' and let slip the dogs of war." But the audience seemed to approve, as the audience nearly always does when an actor strains his throat.

After the first act I went out to cool myself in the corridor and get such fresh air as I could. The father of the girl went out, too, and I had the satisfaction of seeing him engaged in the very human occupation of quenching an ample thirst.

And here let me enter my humble but most emphatic protest against those people who come late into the stalls. There must

have been quite sixty who came in after half-past eight: there may be valid excuse for six, but not for sixty. And I observe that the young man is the greatest offender. The young man I mean, seems surprised to find himself there at all; when he is shown to his row he takes as long as possible to reach his seat, and when he gets there he seems doubtful whether he ought to sit in it. It is not inspiring to the people in the pit to have a most modern cropped head and white collar standing in relief against the Capitol. These late comers

are a public nuisance, and they should be taught better manners in the public interest, and, if necessary, at the public expense.

When I returned I found my seat occupied by the feet of a plethoric gentleman who sat behind me. I had been previously aware that he was trying to wipe his boots on my back. In moving, which he did reluctantly, he knocked my programme on the ground. As he made no effort to pick it up I regarded him

fixedly. At last his duty dawned upon him, and he secured it and handed it to me. It is not pleasant to have to

"Punctually half an hour late." The nuisance of the late comers.

teach plethoric gentlemen these little lessons.

"Are you enjoying it, dear?" I heard a voice ask.

"Oh! so much, so much," came the answer. It was the girl who spoke, and her voice pleased me as much as her face. I had almost forgotten my friend in the pit when he caught my eye again, nodded, and waved his programme. He appeared to be greatly amused by something, but I could not discover what it was until he raised his arm and pretended to drink from an imaginary glass.

The second act, the great act of the play, went magnificently and with immense conviction; the crowded Forum buzzed with life, the mob swayed and yelled, the scaffolding on the right of the stage was a perch for staring Roman boys. As I have said already, Mr. Waller's management and delivery of Brutus' speech from the rostrum was fine; if the rest of his performance had been equal to that it would have

been memorable. The entrance of Antony with the body of Cæsar is the signal for a threatening monstration the part of the crowd; at they refuse hear him; then, on what appears a sudden impulse, he sends the flower-scatterer of the first act to draw the more prominent citizens back, and after a little whispering and urging, they slowly return. Antony ascends the rostrum, and

the greatest public speech in all literature begins.

And, on the whole, Mr. Tree did justice to it. This is high praise. I followed every word and gesture with the utmost attention, and have not the heart, where so much was excellent, to cavil at a few minor faults. He made the art and subtlety of that superb oration start out and live, and there were a few really great moments. At the words—

... "Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,
And I must pause till it come back to me;"

the sorrow of the mourning Antony left few eyes dry; I cheerfully confess that my own were wet. And later, when a ring is made about the body, and Antony descends and lifts the sword-torn mantle, MR. TREE made an excellent point by pausing after the line "'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent," and then, his face lit with recollection and, as it were, appealing to the crowd to remember, too, he adds, "That day he overcame the Nervii."

The rising triumph of the man as he feels the heart of the mob throbbing under his hand is indicated with great spirit and resource, the words grow firmer, the passionate appeal more direct; and at the words—

"Kind souls, what weep you when you but behold

Our Cæsar's vesture wounded? Look you here,

Here is himself, marr'd, as you see, with traitors,"

the last disguise is cast aside, and the populace is won.

After the end of the second act the interest flags, and I think it would have been wise to curtail the rest even more than has already been done. The scene between Brutus and Cassius, excellent in itself, does not help the action; and yet I should be sorry to lose Mrs. Tree, whose playing of Lucius here, and earlier in the piece, is charming, and her singing of "Orpheus with his lute," most dainty and effective. It is curious, but certainly true, that Shakespeare nearly always reaches his climax before the end of a play, and if the last act or scene is not an actual anti-



My friend in the pit.

climax, it, at any rate, gradually declines in interest.

To sum up, this production of Julius Casar is worthy to set a new tradition for a new theatre. It is a superb and moving spectacle, not without faults in the acting, but scenically almost perfect, and a miracle of stage management. It will be interesting to see how far the public is touched by great work adequately presented, and whether the play will have a long run. I fear that public taste, if such a thing truly exists, has been vitiated by musical burlesque and meretricious nonsense; we live in an age that prefers suggestion before candour, and coloured water before blood, that thinks more of prettiness in petticoats than the larger issues of human things. Prettiness in petticoats is all very well, and I am myself no inconstant worshipper; but I remember also that life is not all embroideries, and that there is such a thing as strong meat for men.

Well, the curtain was down, and I gathered up my belongings and left Rome behind. The girl was just before me,

leaning on her father's experienced arm; as they paused a moment, I passed and my hand touched hers. Shall I ever see you again, thought I, and, if so, when, and where? Are the fates at work already, and are our life threads to cross?

I waited on the pavement and saw the pair get into their carriage; I made a mental note of the arms upon the panel as the door closed. She looked out of the window, and I thought she smiled at me; I uncovered and bowed; she returned my salute. I suppose she thought she knew me; I am probably like an officious cousin of hers, confound him!

I felt a hand upon my arm, and turning found my friend of the pit at my side.

"Come and have a drink," he said.

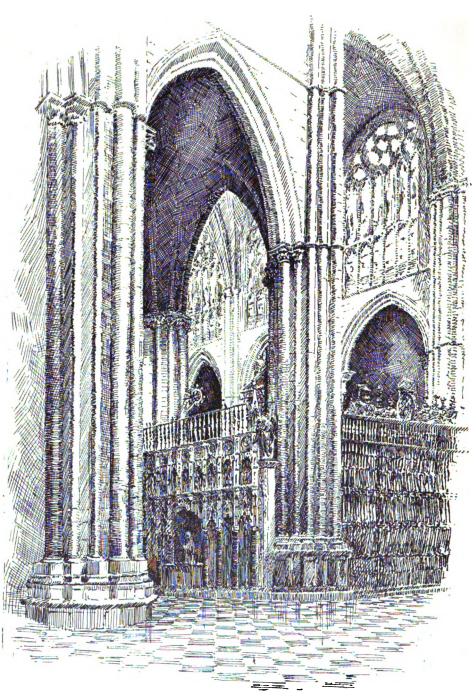
"No," said I, "I am still in Rome and there is no Falernian in the cellar. Didn't you see the Roman father and his daughter drive away?"

He looked at me in some surpise. "I don't understand you," he said.

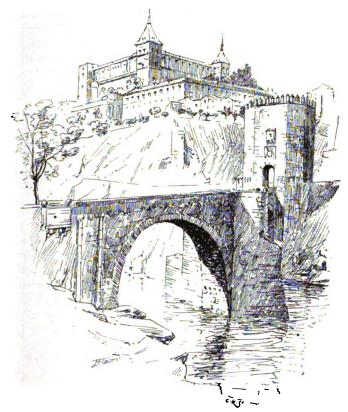
"No?" said I. "Well, I don't understand myself. Good-night."

В.





INTERIOR OF TOLEDO CATHEDRAL.



Puente de Alcantara, Toledo

TOLEDO.

BY HANNAH LYNCH.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. JAMES.

THE Toledo you visit to-day is the Toledo of Gautier's day, Toledo as she fell from eminence as Spain's capital into gloomy obscurity, when the rising of her Comuneros, under Juan de Padilla, was quelled by Charles Quint, and later, when the morose Philip chose miserable, ugly Madrid for his capital. Belted by her legendary river of golden water, the yellow, untravelled Tagus, she sits, forsaken, beautiful, and austere upon her throne of seven steep rocks. The train deposits the traveller at the foot of

the town, and at once his senses are besieged and gratified. In these dull days it is a sensation to enter a forlorn city by such a noble bridge as that of Alcantara, turreted and castellated on either side. Imagination is projected back into the feudal ages, and one almost hears the flourish of trumpets that accompany martial drama. The banks of this yellow river are the shores of sombre poetry; the broken walls and ramparts that circle so magnificently upward to the foot of the huge Alcázar are a protest against

the mediocrity of our modern taste and civilisation. For Toledo clings to the past, and still wears the visage of proud



and inconsolable regret with which she closed the last page of her intimate history. Just so brown and barren, with such a front of unflinching sternness, such an air of charmed slumber and living legend, the verdure of the bright Vega lending grace to the splendid sadness it so sparklingly surrounds, must she have looked in her great day of hieratic glory, when Councils were held here, and Gothic sovereigns dutifully knelt to armed archbishops, in her brief poetic hour of Moorish triumph, in her long shout of feudal revolt.

From the two bridges at either end of the town, San Martin and Alcantara, the road rounds what remains of Wamba's walls, cut along the edge of the steep rocks upon which the picturesque old city is built. Writing of these walls and gateways and bridges, Street says: "They are the finest I have anywhere seen." Certainly the entrance to Toledo is unique. The boldness of site is unsurpassed, spreading upward from the narrow zone of the Tagus to the towers of the Alcázar and Cathedral pinnacled against the upper arch of heaven. High rocks project,

upon which odd enchanting streets and lanes are cut like sharp upward and downward strokes. Each street has its surprise, with the wide portals, the nails, as large as half-oranges, fantastically wrought, stamping the doors with their ineffacable historic note, the artistic Spanish balconies of heavy iron curving inwards, the gay glimpses here and there through open doorway of a tiled and foliaged patio, the mad fashion of its tortuous course, its quaintnesses of colour and form. landscape around wears the look of ardent desolation, and to walk among the empty hills, yellow, and brown, and rose, is to taste the odours of Araby. Every step you take upon the rude herbage sends out a pungent scent like spice. here captivates by the magnificence of its penury. It can dispense with charm in its haughty and harmonious nudity. It makes no pretence to sheathe the peril of its broken precipices with the beguilement of verdure, but lets them hack their murderous way to the river brim without any sign of vigorous vegetation. Heavy and still the light, with autumn glories of colour it is worth visiting Toledo alone for, and history becomes so close a companion that the march of centuries is forgotten, and we ecstatically walk with Goth and Moor.

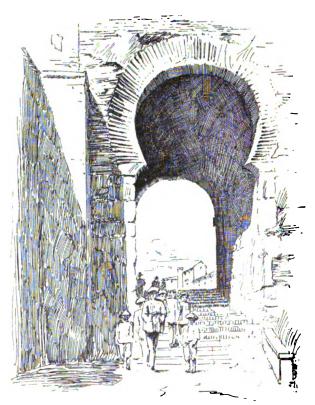
The first thing to attract the traveller is the famous Puerta del Sol. This Arabic gate is a feature of bewildering beauty. I know nothing on earth to compare with If you have walked from the station, it consoles you for the dust, and mitigates the torture of the vilest pavement of the entire universe. From the pretty little terraced garden beneath it, the Miradero, you may watch the magical sunsets of October (the best month for Toledo, her hour of brilliant loveliness) and look across the Vega, where the old Palace of Galiana stood, one of the departed wonders of this wonderful town, and follow the long silent curves of the yellow Tagus, which lies curled like a great serpent asleep upon the tawny land. Above you enter a region of lanes, so narrow, and so thickly shadowed by heavy stone, that there is hardly a chink for the broad beams of heaven, and streets that, to the eye below, seem to touch the sky. Here, at least, illusion is pampered, curtained off from the faintest whiff of disappointment. Words even are full of exotic charm, and chime a pleasant assurance of fidelity to a vivid and vital past.

You tumble upon the three-cornered, impossible, delicious Zocodover. Who is to analyse the fascination of this strange word? It means, I believe, in Arabian, Place of the Beasts. Here fairs, markets, meetings, autos da fe, revolutions, conspiracies, everything that could take place in picturesque times, were held. It has not changed in a single feature. Through

an archway on the left you may step down to the squalid little inn Cervantes dwelt awhile in, and see above the rude wooden gallery, the window at which he sat writing the Ilustre Frégona. The shade of Cervantes accompanies us throughout all our wanderings in Spain. To have harboured him, if but for a single night, is glory enough for any town to call for the tourist's respectful visit. The pleasantest hour of the Zocodover is after sunset. When you have wandered through the lovely flushed dimness of the Cathedral above, whose beauty at this moment becomes magical through the lights of its 750 painted windows, saunter round the colonnaded plaza, with all the queer little shops getting ready their evening illumination. You may sit in front of the inevitable Cafe Suiza, and sip a glass of coffee or beer in the midst of merry chatter, and the slow passing to and fro of idle

Spaniards and blighted officers who detest this dull garrison, where there is nothing on earth but the picturesque If you have come for distraction. abroad in search of local colour, you will not find its equal the world over. Girls go by with jars admirably poised on their heads or shoulders, water-carriers lead their patient mules laden with big water-jars, or the fruit and vegetable sellers, after the day's affairs, drop into the animated twilight behind their donkeys piled with baskets. 'Tis a revived glimpse of the picaresca novel, for amiable scoundrels loll upon the stone benches of the little place, and haughty and impoverished dons strive to look as if they were in the habit of dining.

The street leading upward takes you to the Alcázar built by Charles V. for his wife, who died before it was finished, in the



Moorish arch leading to Zocodover.

insignificant palace of Fuensalidas. Tradition will tell you airily that Charles, on seeing completed the regal staircase, without its equal for magnificence, exclaimed: "Now, for the first time I feel I am an Emperor." But Charles never saw his palace completed. It may be called a posthumous monument, since neither the Empress for whom it was built nor the Emperor who commanded its erection lived to cross its threshold. All we see

now is its imposing facade, the glorious patio, and this gigantic staircase, wide enough for a whole city to ascend it at once, which leads nowhither. They are restoring for years the artesonada roof that ran round the galleries of the courtyard, only instead of reproducing it in wood, it is

in ironwork—very effective—which will probably be completed in another hundred years. A window is shown in the midst of space, with no walls to indicate a chamber, as that at which the imprisoned French Blanche, unhappy wife of Pedro the Cruel, sat looking out upon a beautiful landscape as inadequate consolation for her inexplicable captivity.

But the glory, the pride, the fame of Toledo rest upon her unique Cathedral. There is nothing like it in all Spain. Is there anything to match it elsewhere? Instantly, on crossing the threshold of any

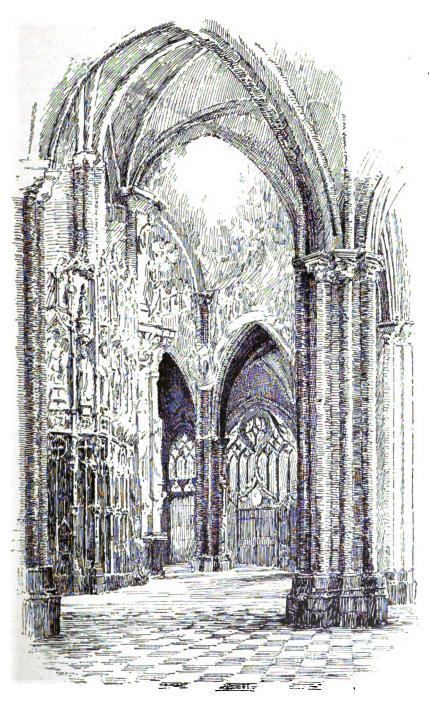
of its doors, the spirit surrenders in awe to its captivation. You feel that architecture here has reached the highest note of hieratic majesty. Mere admiration is blunted, so seizing is the imperious silence of emotion. Who could attempt to describe the grandeur of these five immense aisles, where you walk through a forest of pillars, illumined with the jewelled lights of 750 stained glass windows? It is the mysterious eloquence of its silence,



The Zocodover, Toledo.

the multiple claims of its beauty, that convert it into a place, not of prayer, which means the cry of the individual, but of meditation on the complete insignificance of the individual. So must the Pagans have felt in that other unique temple, the Parthenon. The Cathedral of Toledo is the Chris-

Parthenon, an unique temple, more glorious, more impressive, more perfect than any other. You may mount miles of belfry stairs, and sound the famous bell of Toledo, the largest of the world, with a peal that reaches Madrid. But you will suffer physical torture while listening. From here you may look down upon the earth, as far from you as if you gazed from Alpine heights, and enjoy a thrill of fascinating peril. Below, through incredible depths of space, flows the Tagus, making almost an island of rock and town, and around



INTERIOR OF TOLEDO CATHEDRAL.

a violent line of hills, with the smiling verdure of the broad Vega, and a wide opening for the way of Madrid.

The hasty tourist can make shift with a half day in Toledo. He can, in a few hours, gather a distinct and ineffaceable idea of its wonders, seize à vol dio'seau, as it were, the town's austere significance, the stern genius of its Gothic note mixed with the softer, more voluptuous beauty of the Arabian character; the pervasive religious quietude and dominance and the regal pride of its dead personality. In such a glimpse he will carry away as a permanent memory the strangely magnificent picture it makes against the high heaven, with its crown of towers and spires, all more or less steeped Moorish tradition, the mudéjar steeples, semi-Arabian roofs and pillars, Roman-Gothic, Moorish-mediæval legend, such as you will see nowhere else in all Europe. Beside it Nuremberg is cheap and modern, and Florence a picturesque modern realisation of the enchanting Middle Ages. In so short a time you may walk ramparts of a captivation as penetrating as the Spanish Romancero. And all (starting from Madrid) at the cost of a few pounds, with an excellent hotel, the "Castilla" (the only one of Toledo, for the others are just as dear, and are atrocious), and much suffering from spiked stones, and sun and dust, and a yearning for silver streams, and ice, and cold water.

But to depart the same day is to miss the greatest charm of Toledo. First, the vivid glow of sunset in the Cathedral aisles, then the splendour of sunset lines along the hills, over the wavering river, and splash of crimson upon the suburb Antequela; the deep twilight effects over the curving path of Our Lady of the Valley, the dimness of gorges and silent mountain-ways, and the clear fluid atmosphere; reverie above the scented hills of San Martin in the romantic neighbourhood of the bath of Florinda, where

each step perfumes the still air, and the herbs are of a sweeter pungency than those of Provence, breathing of honey and Oriental dreams. To leave these feudal streets with the stern railing of their windows and their pall of black shadows, the dusty yellow squares, the odd little plazas and broken terraces, all the less imaginative allurements of beautiful churches, of alcágars, of ruined palaces, patios, grand staircases; of bridges, unsurpassed in beauty, gates, ramparts, all part of a legend in stone of unperishable romance, and wander out through the exquisite Puerta del Sol, and the martial bridge of Alcantara by dropping dusk, is to drink the very air of fairyland. The Gate of the Sun is a sculptured Moorish poem in red and brown against the limpid sky, where the stars begin to shine like lamps. The castellated bridges are a note of pure romance; and above the darkening flow of the river there are layers of roofs drooping to its marge under terraces of spires, and domes, and towers, their colour blending entrancingly with the red hills and the burnt rocks. The light is still brilliant though the sun has set, and the atmosphere is so clear that the precision of line to the remotest distance is perhaps too bold for beauty. But what a harmony in its audacity, what a chastening vigour in its poverty!

Above the charming bridge of San Martin, built by Charles V., is that singular monument of Gothic magnificence, with its matchless cloisters, San Juan de los Reyes. Some travellers go into ecstacies over the interior of this superlatively sculptured church; others, this writer amongst them, find it a distinct disappointment. There is no mystery, no charm about its single wide aisle. One misses the witchery of shadow, the enchantment of soft and coloured light. There is no stained glass to send purple and ruby and orange rays slanting across the stone, but the crude glare of daylight travels unbrokenly down from the circle of windows in the dome. The church seems too short and too low for such extraordinary width of aisle and massiveness of highly wrought pillars. And then, the excessive splendour of the decoration, at first a surprise, becomes an aching labour for the regard. Whoever saw

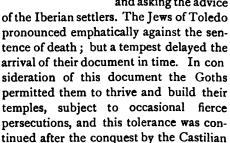
such a rich wonder of heavily sculptured walls and columns? But it is too intricate, too gorgeous to please. Its artistic value is immense. yet it leaves the eve But outside, the cloisters, even in the disfigurements of the restorer's touch, reveal a surpassing delicacy of beauty, with an exquisite note of claustral mirth, of graceful, smiling sanctity, befittingly wedded to the order of St. Francis, to whom the monastery belonged. Foliage and verdure, and flowery branches with the sun upon them, make a big vivid splash of colour between the arched four and columned galleries, and the whole picture is permeated with an indescribable

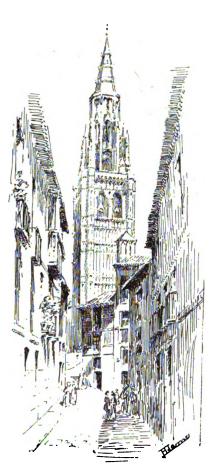
gaiety and lightness. The historical interest attached to this famous monument of Toledo's departed glories lies in the fact that it was built by Isabella and Ferdinand to commemorate their defeat, at Toro, of Isabella's rival, the Beltranya, the daughter her brother Henry persisted in regarding as his own, to the vast entertainment of his Court, where she was by

her nickname openly connected with the Queen's lover, the Count of Beltran. Round the walls outside are a quantity of rusty chains, which were taken off rescued captives of the Moors, and which constitute anything but a pretty ornament.

A little downward is the now desolate

and squalid quarter known long ago as the Juderia. Here the Jews dwelt, once a wealthy, learned, and important body in Toledo. Among the various traditions is one that after the taking of Babylon by · Nebuchadnezzar, colony of Tews founded Toledoth, and the reason the Iews were allowed under Christian rule possess their synagogues here is accounted for by the curious legend that at the time Christ's arrest the Rabbis of Jerusalem decided to consult the Rabbis of far-off Toledo before pronouncing the sentence of death. A deputation was in consequence sent with a long parchment stating the case, and asking the advice





The Cathedral.

sovereigns until the fanatic San Vicente de Ferrer came from Valencia, brandishing the cross in one hand and the torch in the other, and, in the name of Christ, set fire to the whole *Juderia*, preaching the massacre of the Jews, the sacking of their temples, the destruction of their homes. Isabella finally expelled them



The castle of St. Servando, Toledo.

from her kingdom, and this long-suffering race was thus flung out of a city, theirs before the kingdoms of Castile existed, theirs before Roman or Carthaginian trod its rough pavements and built the great walls along its ramparts. You may gather some notion of what this Jewish colony was from inspection of the two lovely synagogues to-day in fair preservation. Santa Maria la Blanca is the more

imposing, el Transito the more beautiful. The former is Moorish-Byzantine, the second Moorish-Andalusian, that is, less austere, more graceful, with a delicacy and wealth of sculptured wall that delight the eye. It was Samuel Levi, the treasurer and friend of that historic monster, Pedro the Cruel, who built this lovely gem of

temples, and in the neighbourhood was his magnificent palace, wantonly sacked, when Pedro, in need of funds, arrested Levi, and plundered him previous to his assassination.

Pedro's palace is on an ugly square, near the palace of the Trastamares, which Henry of Trastamare bestowed upon Du Gueschin for his unchivalrous services in the suppression of the King, his stepbrother. Nothing of the former remains but the door with the massive knocker and big half-orange-shaped nails, but some notion may be gathered of the vanished magnificence of the Trastamare palace from the staircase and gateway. Hereabouts was the house Hernandez Cortes was married from; an enamoured page stabbed himself at the bride's feet, as the bridal procession left the house. An idea of the old mudéjar palaces of Toledo will be had by a visit to the famous Casa de Mesa and the Taller del Moro, the latter earlier by some centuries. Cordovese-Morisco, and the former, far more beautiful Granadino-Morisco. Study the walls, the ajimez windows, the superb artesonado ceilings, and then rebuild in imagina-

tion at its supreme hour such a city as Toledo must have been in its Moorish splendour, which traditions were still maintained under Christian rule, Moorish architects being employed even in the building of churches, hence the mudéjar steeples, the ajimez windows, and horseshoe arcades, until the fatal unhappy day of the expulsion of this glorious race.

THE PIRATES OF THE SOLENT.

THE NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE IN COMPANY WITH THE POET AND THE BOOKMAKER; CONTAINING THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT, AND SOME ACCOUNT OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES; WITH OTHER STRANGE AND IMPROBABLE ADVENTURES: EXTRACTED FROM THE LOG OF THE "FOLLY."

BY ALLEN UPWARD.

ILLUSTRATED BY THOS. DOWNEY.

II.

EXTRACT FROM THE LOG—HOW TO LOG—
CURIOUS IDEAS ON SEA FISHING—SAD
STORY OF A YOUNG MAN—FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE TYRANT—GETTING STORES
—DISCOVERY OF THE NEW FOREST—
A YAWL DESCRIBED—THE ANCHOR'S
WEIGHED—THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONER
—DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

" COUTHAMPTON: Noon:—All on board this morning at Waterloo dock, saw our cargo labelled and stowed in the hold, and secured berths in a smoking cabin for the passage to Southampton. At three bells, fair weather having been signalled outside, the boatswain blew his whistle, the ports were closed, and we got under way. We ran out with a light following breeze, heading W.S.W. At Clapham Pier we moored alongside for a minute, and embarked some passengers. We then set all steam and ran before it with every wheel drawing, making about thirty knots an hour, our course being altered a point or two to S.W. by S. At five bells we rounded the Woking light, under our lee. In the Basingstoke roads we broached-to for a spell to wait for a tender from Reading; after which we ported and went off on the starboard tack, S. and a point E. At Eastleigh point we cast off some of our towing craft bound for Portsmouth, and took up a consort from Salisbury. We then put the safety-valve hard down, and bore up for Southampton on a W. by S.

course, going free. A red buoy on the port bow delayed us for a short time outside the harbour, but at last we crossed the points, taking the starboard channel, ran into the jetty under close-reefed brakes, and dropped our lever at eight bells. We came down the side, chartered a four-oared cab, and landed at a hotel for lunch."

The above is an extract from the log. It forms, in fact, the first entry. It was not till the expedition was fairly on its way that I remembered that it would be necessary to keep a proper nautical log. The above represents my first effort at this kind of writing. I give it as a specimen of my log style, which, I am led to think, is not without a character of its own. I do not of course pretend to have mastered the whole art of logwriting. It may well be that there are faults in this log. I do not claim that my log is perfect, I simply say that I regard it as a good, average, all-round. amateur log, and that I am not ashamed of it.

Experienced seamen have manifested emotion on reading this log. The skipper of the yawl himself told me that he had never seen a log quite like mine. A dear old Admiral, with whom I used to play golf at St. Helens, on being shown this log shed tears and said

"I am considered by some to be an authority on naval matters, but I could

not have written that log. I dare not have done so, in fact."

And a member of the Royal London Yacht Club with equal warmth pronounced my log to be, not a log, but a poem. After this, no doubt, I shall be told by superior critics in the Press, who have never been to Southend in their lives, that my log is not a good log—that it lacks the true nautical ring.

It was at first my intention to make the log a complete record of the cruise, and to print it as it stood; but after the Poet had taken a mean advantage



"What's the matter with my stockings?" he demanded.

of the days when he was captain to write poetry in the log, and after the Bookmaker had tried his hand at logging the events of the Bembridge Regatta, in language which must be seen to be believed, I could no longer feel any real pride in the thing, and gradually let it drop.

When we met at the station to come down, I was disheartened to find that I was the only member of the party who was properly attired. In a blue cap, blue suit, blue shirt, blue tie, and blue socks, tempered only by a pair of white pipe-clayed shoes, I flattered myself that I was maritime from truck to keel. The Poet, with the disgraceful self-indulgence of his

class, had yielded to the temptation to put on flannels, though I had carefully explained to him beforehand that they were only permissible when actually on board, and not then after two o'clock in the day. The Bookmaker had so far yielded to the joint prayers of the Poet and myself as to discard the worst features of his former unchristian costume, including the brown leather waistcoat with onyx buttons, and the gaiters. He now wore a Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers, with stockings, which I charitably hope he will not see before him when he comes to die. The

train had hardly started when the Bookmaker appeared to notice the attention which his stockings had aroused.

"What's the matter with my stockings?" he demanded resentfully. "Don't you like the pattern?"

"I am unable to say whether I like the pattern," I answered, my long-suppressed bitterness

welling up within me, "because it is impossible for me to tell what the pattern is. The designer of the pattern appears not to have been aware that his work was intended to be used for human stockings, and not for elephant-cloths. I have no doubt that his pattern would be admirable on a carpet; it might even be perceptible on a fair-sized table-cloth, but considered as a pattern to go on stockings, its fault is that there is too much of it round the corner, so to speak."

The Bookmaker snorted angrily, and turned his attention to the Poet, who had brought a fishing-basket into the carriage with him, from which he was carefully disentangling some artificial flies. "What the flames are you doing with those things?" the Bookmaker enquired scornfully. Throughout this work I have thought it well to translate the more highly allegorical language of the Bookmaker into words in more general acceptance.

"These are to fish with," replied the Poet, good-temperedly.

"Fish with! Fish out of the yacht with, do you mean?" exclaimed the Bookmaker.

"Certainly. Do you object to my fishing out of the yacht?"

The Bookmaker indulged in a horselaugh.

"You idiot!" he cried. "Don't you know more about sea-fishing than that? You don't catch fish at sea with a rod and line. You catch them with nets."

Then for the first time in my experience of him, the Poet lost his temper.

"Look here," he said sharply, "when I want your advice I'll ask you for it. This is a free country, and I shall fish in just what way I like. If you don't care about it, you can go ashore."

I saw that it was time to interpose.

"Come, come, gentlemen," I said soothingly, "no quarrelling. Let each enjoy himself in his own way, provided he does nothing to bring discredit on our joint enterprise. The only thing which I am anxious about is that we should do nothing which may lead the crew to suspect that we are not practised yachters. Observe——" And with a gesture of pride I produced a beautiful new curly meerschaum from my pocket, and began to fill it.

They both gazed at me with faltering looks.

"What does that mean?" asked the Bookmaker nervously.

I gave him a reproachful glance.

"Is it possible that you do not know that a curly meerschaum is the only pipe which may lawfully be smoked on board a yacht? To come on board without one is equivalent to going to stay at a country house without a tooth-brush. To smoke a briar on deck during the Cowes Week ensures blackballing at every respectable yacht club."

And I proceeded to pour into their awed, expectant ears the sad story of Seymour-Smythe.

The truth about the mysterious fate of this ill-starred youth has never found its way into print. Everyone must remember his sensational rise into eminence. Even while a boy at Rugby he had attracted public attention by breaking the record for the quarter-mile. On his expulsion from Rugby he had gone to Cambridge where he at once achieved distinction by his performances as a threequarter for his College. Quickly graduating as a "Blue," he played against Oxford in the memorable year when that seat of learning was literally walked over to the tune of three goals and two tries to a minor. Not content with greatness in one department only, he next turned his attention to the river, with the marvellous result that in his third year he rose to the unique position of stroke of the Light Blue eight.

Having thus carried off the highest honours which an academic career has to bestow, he left Cambridge, without a degree, and arrived in London to find the ball at his feet. Welcomed with enthusiasm to the Leander, he carried off the Diamond Sculls at the first attempt, and was universally looked upon as the most distinguished man of his day.

But all these splendid prospects were overcast in one fatal moment, and he suddenly disappeared from society, never to be heard of again. He had been invited, shortly after filing his petition, to spend the Cowes Week on board Mr. Goldbug's yacht *Highflier*, his fellow-guests being the manager of the Empire Theatre, the King of Portugal, the late Fred Archer, the Czarevitch, and several Cabinet Ministers and bishops. He was

The Tyrant.

received on board with much distinction by his host, and all went well till the following morning, when poor Smythe, who had been smoking cigars all the previous day, thought he would try a pipe for a change.

He took out his meerschaum and began to fill it. Hardly had he removed it from its case when the Czarevitch, with whom he happened to be talking, drew

himself up with an air of some hauteur, remarked that he had left his handkerchief under his pillow, and stalked off to his cabin, from which he did not return. Immediately after the manager of the Empire came up, paused as if to speak, and then, with a glance of deep loathing, turned hastily on his heel and marched away. Beginning to wonder if anything were amiss, the unlucky Smythe went up to one of the bishops, whom he had rather snubbed the night before, and asked him for a light. But even the bishop drew back with an expression of scarcely-veiled contempt, and rudely declared that his matches were in the pocket of his other apron.

This insolence from an inferior warned Smythe that

something was wrong, and he was just going to seek Mr. Goldbug for an explanation when he saw his host advancing quickly towards him, his face flushed with anger. Before the unfortunate Seymour-Smythe could address him he broke out fiercely-

'Pardon me, Mr. Smythe, but when I invited you to spend a few days on my yacht, I was under the impression that you were accustomed to the usages of polite society. I regret now to have to nform you that my other guests refuse to stay on board unless you go ashore in-Your luggage has been placed in stantly. the launch, and I shall be glad if you can make it convenient to step into her at once."

The stricken wretch implored Mr. Goldbug to tell him what was the faux pas of which he had been guilty.

"I will tell you when you are in the launch, sir," was the stern reply.

> the miserable And as Smythe cowered down in the stern-sheets amid the open jeers of the crew, Mr. Goldbug bent over the gangway, and hissed out:

> "Do you realise that you are smoking a straight meerschaum?"

> I insert this story, not because I believe it to be true, but because of the moral lesson it conveys. The man who told it to me gave me to understand that the curly meerschaum was usually hired out with the yacht, but on enquiry this turned out to be a mistake. I therefore made my companions understand that they must procure replicas of my treasure the moment we arrived in Southampton, and, subdued by the impressive legend I had told them, they meekly obeyed.

While at lunch in the hotel we were waited upon by appointment by the skipper of the Folly. He proved to be a tall and bearded mariner, with a striking family likeness to the pirates who infest the boards of the Adelphi Theatre, and wore beneath his jacket a blue jersey, on the bosom of which the name of the yacht was tattooed in large crimson letters.

I ought to explain that this personage had not been engaged by us, but was supplied under the terms of the charter with the other fittings of the yacht.



full ship's company was made up of the skipper, one man described in the charter as a "deck hand," and a boy. Each of these persons, I believe, had a name or names by which he was known among his friends on shore, but so far as we were concerned those names were writ in water. The skipper, for reasons which will presently appear, became known among us from an early period of the cruise as the Tyrant, the unfortunate boy was usually referred to as the Victim, and their remaining collaborator answered to the general designation of the Crew.

As soon as we had overcome our first nervousness at the appearance of the Tyrant, we gathered that he had come to announce that the Folly was all ready to start, and to ask what hour would suit us to come on board. This way of putting it sounded all right; it was only bitter experience which was to teach us that such enquiries from the Tyrant were a mere form, concealing a fixed purpose to bend us to his own iron will.

He addressed me from the first as the leader of the party, an honour which the envy of my companions led them to attribute to the perfect technique of my costume. In the innocence of my heart I answered:

"We will come on board at once, skipper, as soon as we have had lunch. Say two o'clock."

"Very good, sir." The Tyrant thoughtfully scratched his grizzled whisker. "I suppose you have ordered all your stores, sir?"

Good heavens! We had never even thought of such a thing as stores! Concealing my mortification as I best could, I answered:

"No, we have got to do that first, of course. I meant as soon as we had ordered the stores. Say three o'clock."

"Yes, sir." The Tyrant threw an enquiring look at me out of the corner of his eye, as he added, seemingly as a mere piece of news: "The tide won't make till four, sir."

"Indeed!" I nodded and smiled intelligently, secretly wondering what he meant.

"Yes, sir. Did you think of starting before the tide made, sir? There ain't much wind."

I began to draw in my horns.

"No, I'm not very particular about it," I said. "What time do you think would be best to start?"

But the Tyrant was not to be so easily appeared. His was one of those natures to whom it is not enough to subdue. They love to crush and overwhelm.

"You see, sir," he explained in a leisurely tone, "if we gets under weigh, and there ain't no wind, we'm get carried up by the tide, 'stead of going down."

"Quite so, that is exactly what I feared," I answered, clinging desperately to the appearance of dignity, though I felt that I had already fallen many degrees in the Tyrant's estimation. "Very good, then I take it four o'clock will be the time?"

The Tyrant gazed at me with fatherly compassion. His voice took a parental tinge:

"We'll start at four, if you say so, sir, of course. But have you reckoned on the double tide, sir?"

I saw the Poet glancing at me with unconcealed derision, and heard the Bookmaker's foot scrape savagely on the carpet. I felt the time for hollow pretence was over.

"No," I said, callously; "I know nothing about the double tide. What is it, and where is it, and why is it double, and when does it make, and what time can we get the beastly thing off; or have we got to stop here for the next fortnight?"

The Tyrant smiled with quiet triumph. He felt the game was won, and that he could afford to be merciful.

"It's a second tide that comes up Southampton Water two hours after the flood," he explained. "There's only two places in England what has it, and this is one. But if we get a little wind I dare say we shall be out in the Solent afore the second tide sets up. We'll make it four, sir,"

In my gratitude for this unexpected concession I pressed the Tyrant to accept a glass of wine, which he did. While he was drinking it the Poet, giving way to an evil impulse, leant across and murmured in a perfectly audible whisper:

"Ask him about the anchor."

I gave a savage frown to silence him. But it was too late. I saw a look come over the face of the Tyrant as he set down his glass, which showed that he had heard the remark, and my heart sank into my boots.

I was obliged to try and pass it off.

"My friend wishes to know," I said as unconcernedly as I could, "that the yacht is fitted out all right. Of course that is so? She is provided with the usual anchor, no doubt?"

A dark expression came into the Tyrant's eye, from which I foreboded the worst. He answered severely:

"We carry three anchors, sir—sheet anchor, kedge, and bower."

The Bookmaker started. A happy smile broke out on his face, as on the face of one who hears the name of an old friend (the Bookmaker is *not* a member of the Anti-Gambling Association).

"That will do," I said, hurriedly. "You needn't wait. Have everything ready for us at four."

The Tyrant withdrew, and I breathed again. But I was no longer the lighthearted youth who had taken his seat in the train that morning. I began by this time to understand the real difficulties of the enterprise which I had so rashly undertaken, difficulties which had provoked only the cold sneers of the secretary of the Royal Geographical Society.

Lunch over, we separated. I made my way to a Yacht Provision Store to procure supplies for the next few days, leaving the other two to look round the town and get anything that their fancy might dictate.

The task of provisioning a yacht is a delightfully easy one. You select your store, go in, walk up to the first gentleman you see behind the counter, and ask him what you want. He then enumerates the contents of his shop, and you say "Yes" to each item.

The man on whose generosity I happened to cast myself used his opportunity with the greatest moderation. He informed me that I should need several stones of potatoes-I think the number was fifty, but it may have been five,-two or three gross of different kinds of tins, alleged to contain tongues, soups, lobsters, and other rarities, a dozen or so loaves of bread-he was unselfish enough to explain that we should probably find it pleasanter to renew our bread supply from time to time as we went along,—a small cask of butter, and various trifles in the way of biscuits, pickles, pineapples, and other things which I cannot now remem-He cut down the estimate for tea and coffee to the strictly limited allowance of half a pound of each per day, and did not advise more than a quarter of a hundredweight of sugar. The whole of these purchases fitted into a very moderate-sized waggon, and when it came to paying for them I was quite surprised at the amount of change he gave me out of a twenty-pound note. I only hope that that Yacht Provision man makes his store pay. In this world morbid honesty such as his is not always the way to commercial success. Having carried out my task in this thorough manner I strolled down to the pier, followed by my property.

It was a beautiful afternoon. The bright sunlight was breaking in little waves of its own on the restless surface of the tide. All around the pier the water of the estuary was covered with pleasure craft of all shapes and sizes, swinging lazily at their moorings. And there, in the midst of them, lay the gallant craft

which was destined to take a place in history alongside of the Argo, and the Mayflower, and the well-known Ark. It is true that our setting forth was to be more modest than that of these muchboomed excursions. We put on no Yankee swagger; we did not pose as martyrs in the cause of religious freedom, like the self-styled Pilgrim Religion was not our object—quite the contrary. Neither did we pretend we were going to discover a golden fleece, and advertise for heroes from all parts of the country to come with us, like the Argonaut trippers, the Klondyke touts of the past. Still less did we seek to win a cheap reputation for eccentricity by collecting a huge menagerie on board, like the once celebrated Noah. The truly great can afford to dispense with that sort of adventitious aid. What difference would it have made to the real objects of our expedition to have crowded up the Folly with seven cows, and seven camels, and seven tigers, and a couple of elephants, and rattlesnakes, and kangaroos, and fieldmice, and cholera microbes, and other zoological specimens? Posterity will be able to distinguish beween solid merit and mere pretentious mediocrity, and our achievements will be gratefully treasured when the cruise of the Chaldean pirate is forgotten.

Beyond the "forest of masts"-I believe this beautiful phrase to be a quotation-on the farther shore of Southampton Water I beheld the so-called New Forest. Why this place should be described as the New Forest is one of those problems which cause good and thoughtful men like Ruskin and Herbert Spencer to despair of their species. This forest is not new, it is old, more than eight hundred years old. You might as well call Westminster Abbey the New Abbey, or the river Thames the New River, or Cleopatra the New Woman, as call this fraud the New Forest. The history of this alleged novelty is perfectly well

known. It was laid out by a party named William the Conqueror, a mediæval writer of repute, whose Domesday Book is still read by scholars. He has descendants still living, one of whom keeps up the name of William at the present day, and lives in his ancestor's forest. He takes a part in politics. The original William is said to have been also a politician, but not much of a democrat. He was unpopular even in his own forest, and when his little boy got killed there by a playmate's arrow, people said serve him right. This forest is not really a bad forest, but it is a mistake for its advocates to call it new. People come here expecting to find beautiful little treelets in round wooden cages, like they get in forests laid out by their County Councils at home, and when they find a lot of old decaying trees, covered over with moss and rubbish, they feel they have been had. Let this coppice be called the Old Forest, and then people who like old forests can come and enjoy it, and those who like their forests new can go elsewhere.

I dwell on this point because it was my first discovery. I did not propose to discover the New Forest when I started, only the Isle of Wight. But having discovered this Forest en passant, as it were, I throw it in without extra charge.

I was roused from my observations of the landscape by a bustle which drew my attention to the other side of the pier. There lay a sumptuous paddle-wheel steamer, taking in passengers, and puffing as though its boiler would break. I asked the gentleman who had come along with the stores what this portended.

"That's the boat for Cowes," he explained.

I turned pale.

"What!" I cried. "Do you mean to say that they too cherish the project of voyaging to Cowes?"

The man from the Provision Store gazed at me as if unable to comprehend my words. What did he know of our mighty

secret—of the preparations which had attracted the eyes of Europe? Nothing! Absorbed in his own dull round of petty



The Crew.

interests and vulgar joys, he stood there blind and deaf and dumb to the history that was being made before his eyes. It is ever thus.

While these mournful reflections were passing through my mind, the rash vessel which had dared to rival us set forth on her ill-advised attempt. With her paddle-wheels gaily

splashing, and the smoke waving from her funnel, she went off down the river and was lost to view. From that hour to this no word has reached me of her fate. It remains one of the secrets of that sea of which the poet laureate has said:

"Only those who brave its perils Understand its mystery."

Turning away with a sigh, I hastened to the steps at which we had arranged to be taken off.

Here I found the dinghy awaiting me, manned by the Tyrant in person. But the dinghy turned out to be a ridiculously small affair. One glance at it convinced me that it was quite unsuitable for the work of embarking stores. What was really wanted was a lighter, a good-sized lighter, with a roomy hold. However, there were several stout row-boats waiting about at the steps, whose owners seemed anxious to help. I chartered three, and with their aid the waggon was emptied in time, and the heavily laden flotilla set out for the yacht.

Hardly had the last case been embarked when the Bookmaker arrived on the scene, escorting a hand-cart. The Bookmaker's

ideas on the subject of yachting requirements were extremely simple. The contents of the hand-cart proved to consist entirely of bottles of whiskey, with a few sodas thrown in to fill up the corners. To these he added a small tin of sardines, which he produced from his waistcoat pocket with considerable pride.

"There, old man!" he said, offering it to me. "I knew you wouldn't think of sardines."

I waved the tin aside with contempt.

"I have sent exactly two dozen large tins on board. You had better give that to the man who has brought the whiskey down, for his trouble."

The Bookmaker turned red.

"Confound you! I'll chuck the blamed thing into the sea, and give the poor sardines a chance to swim."

He did so, and the sardines immediately swam to the bottom, taking their tin with them.

No sooner was this incident closed than the Poet turned up, carrying a huge watermelon under each arm, and followed by a boy staggering under the weight of a great brown-paper parcel. This parcel, the Poet informed us, contained the complete works of the most distinguished sea-novelist of the day.

"——'s the man for the sea" he explained with enthusiasm. "His novels are full of the stir and motion of nautical life. The ocean winds blow through the leaves, the salt breath of the waves scents every page. We will read these glorious works on board, and they will help us to appreciate the reality."

The voice of the Tyrant was now heard impatiently calling on us to take our places in the dinghy. We were in the act of obeying when a minion of the Post Office rushed up with the celebrated telegram, which has been such a fruitful source of controversy among students of our adventures.

The telegram was addressed: "To the Wellborn Explorers about to start on their

folly." The last word being the yacht's name, should of course have been spelt with a capital; the Post Office are so careless. But I contend there was no real room for doubt as to whom the telegram was meant for. I now reproduce the exact words of the mysterious message.

"Congratulations and farewells to illustrious and sacred voyagers departing on heroic and fatal enterprise. At such crises the voice of duty silences that of affection. Feeling you will never return, I sacrifice you as cheerfully as though you were my only brothers. Hoch, hoch, hoch!"

So, without any signature or other clue to our unknown well-wisher, terminated this extraordinary wire, on whose authorship so many useless guesses have been wasted. The Bookmaker professed at the time to believe it came from the Treasurer of our Inn; the Poet, on the other hand, traced in it the handiwork of the secretary of the Authors' Society, acting on the secret prompting of Sir Walter Besant and Mr. Hall Caine. had, and still have, my own dark suspicions as to the authorship of that telegram, but I have never breathed them into mortal ear, and they will go down with me into the grave.

The rather gloomy view taken by the mysterious sender of the prospects of the expedition cast a slight damp upon our spirits as we stepped into the dinghy. But this feeling quickly passed off, to be succeeded by one of pride, as we approached our noble vessel, and were received in state by the entire ship's company, who suspended a wooden ladder containing two steps, from the side, by means of which we ascended safely to the deck.

The Crew turned out on inspection to form a complete contrast to the Tyrant. He was a small man, with a fresh face and pink hair, at least it looked pink. I am told that there is no such thing as pink hair, and therefore this man's hair may have been really black, or green, or mauve,

or some other colour. I merely say that it had the appearance of being pink to an uneducated eye.

Although a small man the Crew had a high spirit, and throughout the voyage he kept up a stubborn warfare with the Tyrant, which gave me the greatest respect for his courage. The disputes between them appeared to turn upon the duties which a deck hand might or might not lawfully be called on to perform. The Crew carried the rules of the Seamen and Firemen's Union in his bosom, like Christian's roll, and whenever the Tyrant ordered him to hoist the skylight, or scuttle the hold, or do any other thing a little out of the ordinary rut, he pulled out the rules, and thumbed them over to ascertain whether the order was one which his principles required him to dispute. I have never seen a man more faithful to his ideas of duty. If the rules of the Seamen and Firemen's Union had laid it down that it was no part of a deck

hand's duty to stop a leak, I believe that man would have seen the vessel sink, and gone down with it cheerfully, rather than violate that rule.

But the Tyrant scored in the end. At first he was baffled by the quiet persistency of the Crew, and hardly knew what orders it was safe to give him. But in the course of a few days he got to know the metes and bounds, so to speak, of a deck hand's duties, as laid

down in the rules, and then he set to work. He would order the Crew, say, to pipe-clay



The Victim.

my yachting shoes, and the Crew would consult his book and refuse, on the ground that he could only be required to clean boots. The Tyrant would meekly accept this refusal, and then immediately order the Crew to polish all the brasswork on the yacht, or to put a coat of paint on her sides above the water-line, or give him some other job about twenty times more laborious, but which he could not refuse to do under the rules. In this way the Tyrant made the Crew's life a burden to him, without ever violating the rules of his Union.

Naturally the Crew took it in turn out of the Victim. The Victim was a bright and happy child of some fourteen summers, young in appearance, but old in knowledge of the world, and evidently inured to hardship from his earliest infancy. I had read a good deal about sailor-boys in poetry, but the Victim didn't seem to be quite the same kind of sailor-boy, somehow. He didn't

had a stick, which she tried to lay on him, but not in blessing, and not on his head—far otherwise; and when he dodged



her, and ran down into one of the provision boats, she didn't go home and pray for his return; she stood on the edge of the quay and said, "Drat you, you young demon, if ever I catches you on shore again I'll give you what for," or words to that effect.

For the benefit of those persons who may never have seen a yawl, I had better give some description of the specimen

used by us. It carried four masts really, two vertical ones, and two smaller ones, which projected horizontally from each end. The Bookmaker was rather inclined to complain of this arrangement, as making it difficult to distinguish between the head and the tail of the vessel till it began to move; but if you bear in mind that the one in the bows is called the bowsprit, and the other one the bumpkin, there is no real difficulty, at least not to an experienced eye. The

match the sailor-boys in the poems. The sailor-boy in a poem—in a good, well-written poem—always has a mother at home, who lays her hands in blessing on his head in the beginning of the poem when he leaves her, and then prays for him through the rest of the poem. The Victim hadn't any mother at all; but a venerable female, who appeared to be his grandmother, and whose breath scented the sea-breezes with gin and tobacco, came down to see him off. She

mainmast rose out of the front part of the deck, and supported four sails, two in front and two in rear. The ones in front were triangular in shape, and extended between the mast and the bowsprit, the one in front being called the jib, and the one behind the foresail. The sails at the back of the mast consisted of the mainsail, a huge trapezium, and another triangle on top called the topsail, a word whose etymology requires little or no ex-The mainsail, it is important planation. to note, was stretched out on two spars, the gaff above and the boom below; and one of the chief perils of navigation on board a yawl arises from the unpleasant habit the boom has of swinging over from one side of the vessel to the other, thereby endangering the lives of persons who may be seated quietly smoking or playing cards on the deck. The second mast, known by the mysterious name of the mizen, was planted at the extreme rear, and carried a small edition of the mainsail. This sail was attached by a rope to the end of the bumpkin, which is thus made to serve as an artificial extension of the real length of the yawl. When it is borne in mind that the allowance which one boat has to give another in a race depends largely on its length, it will be seen that this contrivance is not quite so childlike as it may appear at first sight.

On the whole the yawl was better inside than out. There was a fairly comfortable cabin in the middle, large enough to hold four persons at once without unpleasant Aft of the cabin came a crowding. species of wardrobe containing a shelf, called the owner's berth, and aft of that again a roomy compartment, resembling in size and shape the wood-cupboard which is found beneath the stairs in every well-built modern house, and containing two shelves, one each side. As soon as we learnt from the Tyrant that this bower was called the ladies' cabin there was a fierce fight to secure shelves in it, the loser (myself) being feebly consoled by the reflection that my shelf gave me a prestige with the hands which the others could not get from the romantic glamour of their shelves.

Just as the order had been given to weigh the anchor, a ceremony never omitted on these occasions, we observed a large and handsomely-upholstered electric launch bearing rapidly down on us. The launch was laden down to the water's edge with huge leather trunks, kit-bags, gun-cases, hat-boxes, rugs, photographic cameras, and golf-clubs, and in the stern sat a bronzed and bearded personage of imposing appearance, clad in a kharki suit, with a white pith helmet, and wearing a revolver and several belts of cartridges round his waist.

"Folly, ahoy!" came borne along the water, as the launch drew within hail.

The process of weighing the anchor was at once suspended, and the hands rushed to the side and suspended the wooden steps ready to receive the stranger. He climbed up them, stepped on board with the assured tread of one who has never experienced rebuff, and after a cool and rather slighting glance over the vessel, beckoned me with his forefinger, and handed me a card.

I took it with a low bow, and read aloud—" The Special Commissioner of the Law Quarterly."

"Ah, I understand," I murmured.
"You wish to interview us at the moment of setting-out?"

The Special Commissioner shook his head impatiently.

"No, no; I don't want to interview you now. I can do that as we go along. My paper has determined to make a special feature of your expedition, on account of the interest it is exciting in legal circles, and I have been commissioned to accompany you as its special correspondent."

I gasped for breath. A hollow moan broke from the parched lips of the Bookmaker. I heard the Poet softly whisper to himself a broken sentence of which I only caught the words, "the newspaper correspondent, that curse of modern—"

Meanwhile the Special Commissioner had turned his back and was superintending the transferring of his luggage to the deck, where it threatened to overtop the main truck and bury the hands from view. I summoned up courage to make a feeble remonstrance.

"Excuse me, sir, but the fact is we were not quite prepared for this honour. I am not sure—that is, I fear—that is to say, I am confident—that you will not find all the accommodation you doubtless require on board this yacht."

The Special Commissioner turned and glanced at me in surprise.

"I don't understand you," he said. "Of course the yacht is not what I could have wished. If I had known I was coming earlier I should probably have insisted on a steamer. But as it is, I suppose I must make the best of it. require four berths only, one for myself, one for my dragoman, one for an interpreter, and one for my cook. I always take my own cook, as the local cooks are generally so fond of garlic. I trust there will be no difficulty about sending off my wires. You will have to anchor and land me whenever we come to a telegraph office; and if the censorship on the island gives any trouble I suppose you won't object to bringing the yacht back to Southampton every second day for me to catch the mails."

I wrung my hands and turned to the others in speechless consternation. The Bookmaker gave a long, low whistle, and thoughtfully scratched his cheek. It was the Poet who stepped into the breach. The Poet thinks he can be satirical when he tries, and when he speaks in a soft, silky, butter-wouldn't-melt-in-his-mouth voice, it is a sign that he is trying.

"Pardon us, fair sir," he began smoothly, "if we seem overwhelmed by this unexpected joy. To win such honour and fame as you have it n your power to bestow, is the chief, nay, the sole, end for which this expedition was organised. is true that some special correspondents are rather chary of conferring fame on anybody but themselves. The correspondent is apt to be the hero of his own telegrams. To read the ordinary war-correspondence of the ordinary newspaper is to gather the impression that the war is being carried on mainly by the correspondents on either side, and that the generals and soldiers are mere supers in the drama. But we feel sure it would not be so with a modest, self-effacing man like you. We should be only too glad if we thought you would do this. We are ourselves reserved and shy men, shrinking from publicity, whose dearest wish is to discover the Isle of Wight by stealth, and blush to find it fame. That is the true reason why we do not invite you to come with us, why we even invite you to leave us, and go a long way off. We are ashamed to confess the fact that our poverty does not allow us to accommodate you on board this yacht. By giving up our own berths we might manage to put up your dragoman and cook and interpreter, but not you. Understand? We have no room for you, no room whatever, not an inch. Skipper, put back those trifles in the launch."

The Special Commissioner stared and glared like one who disbelieves the evidence of his ears.

"Can this be so?" he exclaimed in tones of manly horror. "Do I hear aright? No room for me! No room for the Press! No room for the Special Commissioner of the——Surely, this is some mad dream!" He laughed bitterly. "Is this the nineteenth century, and do I see before me refined and civilised human beings? Or am I talking to Neolithic Men in the night of time?"

The Bookmaker flushed up, and took a step forward.

"Look here, my man, we don't want your abuse," he said angrily. "You'd

better go quietly, or I'll show you whether I'm a Neolithic Man!"

The Special Commissioner of the Law Quarterly laid his hand on his revolver, and for a moment I thought he would have shot the Bookmaker in his tracks. But better thoughts prevailed. He went sullenly down the vessel's side, and, as soon

as the launch was clear, he hurled his parting defiance:

"Very well, gentlemen. But I am determined to do my duty, and my paper has given me carte blanche. I shall charter a steamer, and come after you!"

And with a cruel laugh he sank back in the stern sheets. We laughed, too, holding his words to be an idle threat.

Fools!

While the weight of the anchor was being ascertained I walked proudly to the stern and grasped the

handle of the rudder, in right of my prerogative as captain for the day. This handle, technically known as the helm, or tiller, was made of wood, and ended in the beautifully carved head of a dog, held by me to be a greyhound, but pronounced by the Bookmaker to be a cross between a dachshund and a rattlesnake. As I grasped it the Tyrant fixed upon me a suspicious and malevolent glance, and came fussing after me into the stern.

"Keep your helm up, sir," he grumbled.

Wondering what he meant by this mysterious direction, I toyed gently with the tiller, swaying it from side to side. At that moment the yacht, as if animated by human instinct, gave a sudden twist to one side, and nearly ran down a small

cutter with two foul-mouthed yachtsmen on board. It is not mere guesswork on my part to call them that; I discovered it.

The Tyrant at once threw off the mask.

"Helm up, sir," he shouted savagely, and, laying his own hand on the head of the faithful hound, he dragged it violently in his own direction.

head of the faithful hound, he dragged it violently in his own direction.

I turned on him with some resentment.

"If by 'helm

"If by 'helm up' you mean that you wish the tiller pushed over to the right, you should

say so. How was I to know what you meant? This helm is constructed to move horizontally, not vertically. The expressions 'up' and 'down' as applied to it, therefore, strike me as meaningless, and likely to lead to confusion, and in the end possibly to shipwreck and loss of life."

The Tyrant looked on me like one that hath been dazed and is of sense forlorn. As soon as he recovered himself he muttered a lame apology.



"Keep your helm up," he grumbled.

"I beg your pardon, sir, I'm sure, for thinking as you had been on a boat beore, and knew something about it. You see, sir, when we says 'up,' we means up towards the wind, to keep her away from it, and when we says 'down,' we means down to leeward, to keep her head up."

"Quite so," I responded easily, not daring to admit that this explanation had left me slightly more in the dark than if I had not heard it. "Now you have made matters perfectly clear, and I will take the helm again, and you may go forward."

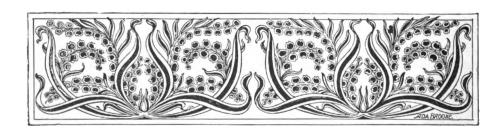
By this time we had twisted our way out of the tangle of shipping immediately round the pier, and were bearing gaily down Southampton Water, with a following breeze. The Tyrant gave a sullen glance round and obeyed, while the Poet and the Bookmaker, who had been interested spectators of the fracas, came aft and congratulated me in stealthy whispers on my triumph.

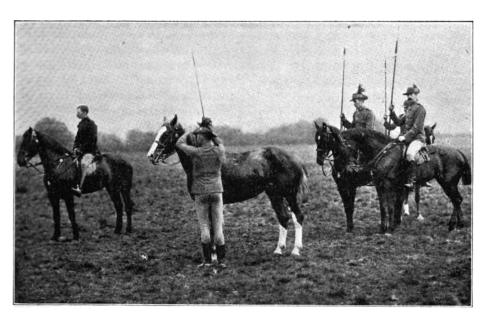
By the time I had scraped the paint off one or two passing vessels, and got a hole torn in the Folly's mainsail by the bowsprit of a schooner at anchor off Hythe—I did not mind paying for the hole, but I thought it mean of the schooner's owner to charge me for damage to his bowsprit,—I had mastered the great principle of steering a yawl. I may say at once that a

yawl differs in many respects from a bicycle. It is more powerful and more The one object on which the vicious. average yawl seems to set its heart, when under sail, is to turn round with its head to the wind, and then begin to go backwards. It cannot be cured of this habit, and it cannot be taught by kindness. cannot help wondering that no yacht architect has the sense to design a boat on the principle of recognising this great instinct, which has been implanted, doubtless, for some wise reason, in the yawl's A yawl with the mainmast in the stern, and the rudder at the bows would, I firmly believe, be a gigantic success, and beat everything of her size afloat. As it is, the pleasure of steering one of these things is marred by the fact that it is simply one long struggle between the yawl and you. You dare not take your eye off it for a moment, or it will fly round and try to hit you with its boom. As the Bookmaker remarked the day we drowned the lovers in the double canoe, off Shanklin, the Folly in a breeze could have given points to the worst buckjumper in Buffalo Bill's collection.

At three bells in the first dog-watch I discovered the Isle of Wight, bearing E.S.W. and a point S. on the weather bow.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]





New South Wales Cavalry.

(Photo by W. Gregory & Co., 51, Strand.)

GREAT BRITAIN AS A MILITARY POWER.

AN INTERVIEW WITH SIR CHARLES DILKE, M.P.

BY ARTHUR H. LAWRENCE.

THE fact that our great Empire is in need of an efficient Army-ready, in a famous phrase, "to go anywhere and do anything "-is so obvious even to the least militant amongst us that it admits of no argument, and in the face of the statements made in the House of Commons and in the Press by such able and farsighted men as Sir Charles Dilke and others, it will be hardly questioned that the present condition of the British Army is one which cries for reform. This has always been admitted—or denied in that official and insincere manner which is tantamount to admission—by successive Governments, and Lord Lansdowne will have brought forward his proposals to Parliament in the direction of Army reform before this article goes to Press.

Yet, on the other hand, it was but a few weeks ago that the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley, boldly declared that he could get two army corps to the coast before the ships were ready to transport them. It would thus seem that the numerical strength and equipment of our Army is a matter which is, in the language of Jeames, "wropt in mystery," although one would have thought that the existence or non-existence of regiments, their precise strength, together with the exact number of horses and artillery in our Army are facts of a sufficiently definite character to satisfy the least visionary Gradgrind. Men, horses, and artillery are substances of too solid a character to be created or swept away with the stroke of the pen, the truth about which is so easily ascertainable that no room is left for controversy except as to the precise urgency for reform.

At the time Lord Wolseley made the interesting and cheerful statement to which I have referred, Sir Charles Dilke, whose encyclopædic knowledge on all matters connected with our national defence no one has ever ventured to call into question, was penning a series of articles on Army Reform for that young but exceedingly healthy contemporary, The Daily Mail. In those articles criticism and admonition are administered to the War Secretaries alike of both political parties, and in them Sir Charles has very carefully and with characteristic impartiality entered into considerable detail concerning the present state of the Army, its strength and equipment. urgent need for very drastic reform is so effectively stated that one cannot but echo the editorial statement to the effect that "we are more than ever at a loss to imagine how Lord Wolseley could get those two army corps to sea."

It was on the day before the opening of Parliament that, in accordance with an appointment which Sir Charles Dilke had very kindly given me, I called to see him at his house in Sloane Street, and as Sir Charles glanced through the article in the February IDLER in which some of his statements in regard to Great Britain's need of a yet stronger Navy are quoted, I took advantage of the occasion to record one or two remarks which Sir Charles then made on that subject, before coming to the question of Army Reform.

"There are one or two statements in your article," said Sir Charles Dilke, "which might well be the text for one or two further remarks. To quote one sentence, 'although our total naval expenditure is larger than that of Russia and France put together, the amount we spend in proportion to our commerce and theirs, is at the rate of one-twentieth of the amount spent by Russia

and France.' Well, I am not sure that there is anything in the consideration of that proportion. After all, our position would depend upon our fleet, whether we had any sea-borne trade or not. For the sake of argument, one can say that you might have a combination of Powers without any sea-borne commerce at all compared with ours, and which, nevertheless, for other reasons, might desire to divide up our colonies amongst themselves, and therefore it might pay them, as an investment, to go in for increased shipbuilding.

"I don't think that sea-borne trade has any real bearing upon strength in battleships at all. It has a certain bearing upon strength in cruisers, for the increase of which one has two purposes in view. They are the exploration or reconnoitring cavalry to our fleet, and are also needed for patrolling our trade routes and our coasts. But if it were conceivable that we had no sea-borne commerce at all it would be no argument for a decrease, or against an increase, in the strength of our battleships.

"Then there is another important point; the comparison between our fleet and the combined fleets of Russia and France. I have always rejected that point of view for years and years pastthat there is any special ground for considering Russia and France as being the most probable combination against us. I have always thought that in any war in which we are likely to be engaged, we should have to allow for the hostility of three Powers: Russia, France, and Germany. It is far more likely that Germany would have to be allowed for in our calculations, as a Power, likely, for example, to make demands upon us with which we could not comply, when at war with Russia and France, than there is any prospect of fighting these two Powers in particular, without having to think of any other.

"Of course, we have a great number of

points where France may be trespassing upon the rights of this country, rights which our successive Governments have declared must be maintained.

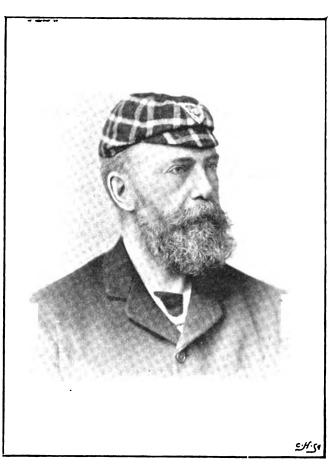
"That is obvious enough, certainly, and also that Russia has ambitions which may, in the long-run, bring her into

eventual conflict with us; and there is the further fact that Russia and France have been acting against us in China for the purpose of making the Chinese give up to France provinces declared to be ours, in a manner directly hostile to us, and that Germany, according to the book since written by the gentleman who was German Minister at Berlin at that time, supported Franco-Russian action on that occasion.

I have always thought, and have been saying it for the last four years, that there is no special reason to expect that we should ever find ourselves at war with these particular Powers, except in such a case that we should have to allow for the possible hostility of Germany also. We

have three Powers to consider, not two, and this seems to have come about in the case of China. So much, by way of addition, I comment on your article concerning the strength of the Navy."

Speaking of the need Great Britain has for an efficient Army, Sir Charles continued: "Any naval action must necessarily be backed up by a strong military force. Assuming that we had proved victorious in a naval engagement, it would be necessary to use the Army for the purpose of delivering a counterblow before we could induce the enemy to make terms



Sir Charles Dilke, Bart, M.P.
(Photo by Wilkinson, 114, New Bond Street.)

for peace. The Navy is necessary both for defence and aggression; the work of the Army is primarily aggressive. Of course, we should have to be the victim of extraordinary reverses at sea before we should need our home forces to protect our shores. At the same time, the work of the Navy would be seriously hampered

if it was found necessary to station part of the Navy around our coast when it could be more effectively employed elsewhere, and in panic times we should have to be able to place sufficient reliance on our home forces—if matters came to the worst—to defend our capital. Then, of course, we might have to defend Canada from an attack by a land force. The protection of India so far as the division of our military force is concerned, is practically a separate question.

"What may be described as 'invasion panic' is a much more real danger than invasion. The fleet would be seriously hampered in its action by the Press and Parliament clamouring for part of the fleet to be kept in home waters in case of threatened invasion. And this 'invasion panic' would constitute a very serious danger indeed."

The question of National Defence is of so vast a character that it is difficult to treat it without going into a great mass of detail, but in reply to my first question concerning the optimistic view which seems to be held in some directions as to the condition of our Army, excellent as its personnel undoubtedly is, Sir Charles was as emphatic as an interviewer could wish.

"The condition of the Army at the present moment is a hopeless business. With an enormous sacrifice in case of war, it might be possible to give the nation an Army sufficient to deliver a counterstroke before the war was ended, but it is a great mistake to rely upon belated effort of this kind.

"But what could not be averted, under present conditions, would be a panic. The most necessary thing of all is to have the Army in a condition at home which would serve to tranquillise the public mind."

"You are not in favour of conscription in any form?" I enquired.

"It is almost universally admitted, I think, that conscription is not really enforced by any Power for such service as ours, and in our own case is certainly quite inapplicable to India. You see that it must always be remembered in discussing this point that we keep a greater part of our Army abroad. More than half of our regular Army is permanently abroad in hot climates and under conditions of distance which make it necessary to send troops out for a long period of service. No one would be in favour of applying conscription in such a case.

"In regard to home service, the case for conscription is not a very clear one. We have got quite men enough of one sort and another—the main cause of complaint is the want of proper organisation. It really comes down to the question—whether the arrangements made for Militia and Volunteers are satisfactory?

"Probably the British public will prefer to pay even more money for the service than entertain the idea of conscription. Personally, the necessity for a compulsory service does not seem to me to exist, and it is certain that we cannot apply conscription to the Indian service.

"We have a hybrid system of enlist ment, and our contention is that the period is too long for home service and too short for foreign service.

"You see, practically all recruits go on foreign service at one time or another. They cannot well be sent to India until after two year's service, but eventually all the soldiers go on foreign service, except the Guards."

"And can the Volunteers be relied upon for defensive purposes?"

"Why not? They are a fine body of men, and the annual expenditure on the Volunteers amounts to quite a million of money. The cost is as much as that of the whole of the magnificent Swiss Army, and there is no reason why this expenditure should not be sufficient to make the Volunteers an efficient force for home defence. The great fault is that they are short of officers, and more particularly of

officers who know their work. I understand, however, that Lord Lansdowne will make a proposal which should go a great way in the direction of making the volunteer forces more efficient. suggestion is that officers who retire from the Army upon pensions shall be called upon to do regular work for the home service. This is the rule in other countries: in Germany, for example. It is also suggested for the Regulars that a system of three years' enlistment shall be adopted, so that recruits may see if they like the service or not, but, of course, at the present moment, I do not know how far Lord Lansdowne proposes to take this excellent idea."

"Do you think that the cases which keep cropping up of starving veterans, men who have been through many engagements, and whose insignificant pensions are wholly inadequate, tend to make recruiting difficult, or is this idea purely sentimental?"

"Well, you see, the veterans in question enlisted under different conditions, but I know that the bad name which men who have left the Army often give the service does affect recruiting very considerably. Grumbling of this sort gets about, and gives the Army a bad name, especially amongst boys of the agricultural class."

"But," I insisted, "if we take the case, say, of two brothers of about the same age. One enlists, the other engages in civilian work. When the former leaves the Army at the end of his term he is infinitely worse off than his brother who has probably been making steady progress meanwhile; whereas the retired soldier has to begin the battle of life all over again. The value of his military experience, as far as hard cash is concerned, is practically nil."

"Yes, that hardship is due to our hybrid system of enlistment, which has every defect. Leaving after the seven years" period the man is, undoubtedly, handicapped. The time is not short enough for him to stand a fair chance in the labour market if he leaves the Army, and it is not long enough to enable him to draw retired pay—in fact, to make a trade of it. It is neither one thing nor the other."

"I suppose it would be quite impossible at a General Election to put the question of National Defence before the electorate as a definite issue?"

"It is quite an inconceivable hypothesis," said Sir Charles, smilingly. "There is not a sufficient body of men in the House with clear and pronounced views on the question who would be able to put forward an intelligible policy.

"If it were conceivable that such a position could arise, and one party took the matter up as a party question it would only mean that the opposite party would adopt the same programme, so that there would be no ultimate issue. All we can do is to make the real condition of things in regard to the Navy, the Army, and reserve forces thoroughly understood in the House and outside it, and to press the matter on the party in office, no matter which party it is."

"There is an impression about," I suggested, "that a Liberal Government is always lukewarm in this matter, and that a Conservative Government is more reliable upon questions of Imperial defence?"

Sir Charles Dilke dissented, and added, "If there is such a view held, it is only by men who know nothing about it, and to whom quite recent history is altogether unknown. As a matter of fact there is nothing to choose between the two great political parties. Each successive Government shows itself quite in the hands of the officials of the Admiralty and War Office, and are alike guilty of weakness and error. The notion that a Conservative Government is more Imperialist than a Liberal Government is not borne out by history.

"If you glance over McHardy's tables

you will see that in the erratic see-saw expenditure on the Navy, for example, both parties are equally blameable. One Government is as bad as the other. There are two occasions when great sums of money have been voted, and a considerable portion of that money expended upon rubbish as the result of a scare. In one case it was a Conservative Government, and in the other a Liberal Govern-The first occasion to which I allude was in '78, before the Berlin Congress and the St. Stephano Treaty, and the other was in '85, at the time of the Penj-deh scare. This see-saw expenditure is a very great evil, and is opposed to economy. You want steady expenditure, for many reasons. Guns, armour-plating, and so on, go through stages of improvement, and the expenditure must go along steadily so as to encourage capitalists to put money into new patents and improvements."

Returning to the main question, Sir Charles said: "In the regular Army we want a better system of enlistment, different training, and a thorough reform of the War Office and our administrative system, rather than more men and materials, although there are many desperate evils to be remedied in this respect. The Volunteers, properly officered and commanded, and supported by adequate field artillery, would, in a very short time, make very good troops indeed.

"Man for man, I think the student of history is justified in believing that the British Army is equal to—quite a match for—any other Army in the world, and as units go I don't think that the fine training of the German soldier, the dash and heroism of the Frenchman, or the fine physique of the Russian soldier is sufficient to make him more than a match for—if equal to—the all-round fighting ability of our good friend 'Tommy Atkins'; but this is a point which can hardly be insisted upon in regard to the British Army, and I believe the student of history would be

equally justified in suggesting that, as a nation, we have been too ready, on many occasions, to rely overmuch on the soldier and officer, and, though it may be magnificent, it is not war to send our Army to fight against fearful odds, whether the odds against us be superiority in numbers, in artillery, or in training."

I had reserved this point, as to the comparison of the military force of Great Britain with that of any other of the great military Powers, as a final question, and I was so much interested in Sir Charles Dilke's carefully expressed reply that I feel inclined to say that the publication of it would alone be sufficient justification for this article.

"The comparison of forces in this way," said Sir Charles, "is a little The forces of the other Powers difficult. are thoroughly known as regards their peace strength, but are limited as regards their war strength by the supply of cavalry, artillery and rifles of the best pattern, trained officers, and so forth; and it is very doubtful indeed, what war force, for example, Russia can put in the field, although her peace army of just under a million men is stronger than the combined peace armies of the Triple Alliance, and stronger than the combined peace armies of France and Germany.

"Again, with our own forces it is almost impossible to know what you ought to count. At a given moment, at home, for the purpose of sending away the fleet, we could undoubtedly count upon an enormous force of men, but they would be almost wholly unsupplied with cavalry and artillery and trained officers, and insufficiently supplied with rifles of the best pattern. In other words, they would be a mob, but that mob would become an army in the course of a few months. So these comparisons are worth very little."

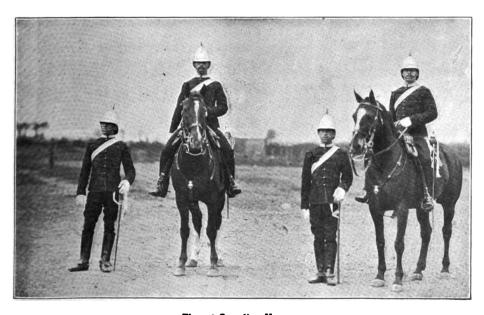
I need not remind the reader that the estimated strength of the regular Army

and of the auxiliary forces, together with the high cost of our army, and how that money is expended, will be found fully detailed in *Whitaker*, or in almost any of the many handy reference-books published, so that it would be of no value to go into that matter here; nor would it be possible without compiling a very long article indeed, as it is just the question as to how far the paper estimate coincides with the facts which will be discussed in Parliament, and which should be fully appreciated by the country.

Indeed, it is obviously impossible within the limits of an article in a popular magazine to go into, or even to trespass on, matters of detail, and, as the reader will have seen, this brief record of the conversation which Sir Charles Dilke so courteously gave me is limited to certain broad issues, and, although it is almost a matter of certainty that for some time to come many necessary reforms will not be effected, there is no doubt that much will be done by the present Government in the right direction, and whatever may be done will be largely

attributable to the efforts made by Sir Charles Dilke and those who think with him. It may be well, however, to recall the reader's attention to the fact that, if we would render conscription—at all events, for home service-unnecessary, the civilian must be prepared not only to pay the piper, but to see to it, by every means in his power, that he gets good value for his money, and that the Army expenditure, which has risen from ten millions of the "fifties" to double that amount at the present moment, shall be so applied, and such a system of administration inaugurated, that Great Britain shall be relieved from the equivocal position which she at present occupies as a military Power.

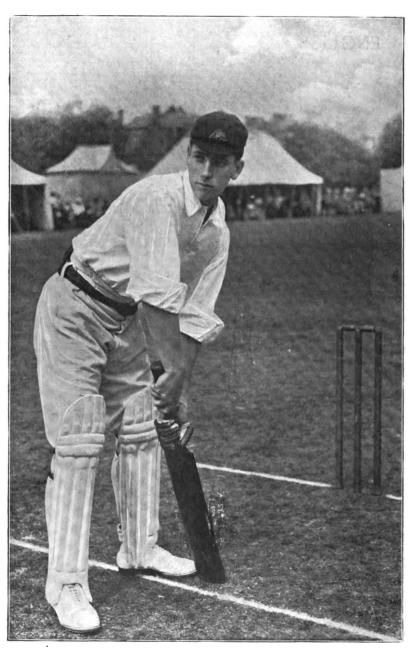
The conclusion of the whole matter, as supported by the elaborately detailed statements which Sir Charles Dilke has made elsewhere, may, I think, be summed up in the unequivocal statement that, whilst our organisation and administrative system is of a less satisfactory character, the *versonnel* of our Army—officers and men—is perhaps of a more satisfactory character than that of any other military Power.



The 1st Canadian Hussars.

(Photo by W. Gregory & Co., 51, Strand.)





CLEMENT HILL.

ENGLISH CRICKET IN AUSTRALIA.

BY CAPTAIN PHILIP C. W. TREVOR.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY E. HAWKINS AND CO., BRIGHTON.

OR the moment, at any rate, English cricket is at a discount. In three consecutive representative matches our eleven has suffered defeat, and hard facts take a great deal of explaining away. Naturally, Mr. Stoddart has been subjected to a superfluity of irresponsible criticism. But he suffers in good company. Sir William Lockhart has, for months past, divided attention in this country with the famous cricketer, and their cases are not altogether dissimilar. Both have been struggling to maintain the prestige of England on distant shores, and both have had opponents to meet who thoroughly understood the climate. resources, and advantages of their own country, and shaped their plans accordingly. Neither has been so successful as his supporters at home could have wished, and both have been the victims of British peculiarity. An observant Spaniard who visited this country remained here nearly the whole of one London season; and then, true to his kind, went home and wrote a book about "The English," he said, "are not an educated people, but you cannot meet a man who does not thoroughly understand all about the British Army and the national game of cricket." With an improved cable system, therefore, William Lockhart and Mr. Stoddart have been compelled to perform before an expert audience. We are, above all things, patriotic, and it is therefore not altogether surprising that Australia's victory should have been discreetly and ingenuously minimised. Evening journalism has had its chance, and, generally speaking, has risen to the occasion. No item of intelligence

(however sad its import) which has been flashed beneath the seas has found Fleet Street unprepared with the ready excuse. "Ranjitsinhji is suffering from quinsy."-Reuter. Wherefore the evening papers spread themselves into little paragraphs reeking with sympathy, and lamented over the "might have been." Then, as the Americans say, "more things came along." "Ranjitsinhji's score is 170." In the following test match the operation was repeated. "The Prince is prostrated with an attack of asthma." Later, "Ranji's innings closed for 189." Then it was that the man in the street spake words wherein blasphemy was obliterated by enthusiasm. He desired that several undesirable things might happen unto him in certain eventualities, and concluded that if it only pleased Fate to afflict that princely batsman with scarlet fever, he opined that "them Colonial blokes would never get him out." It was in vain after this for a patriotic Press to attribute an English reverse to the fact that Hirst was suffering from a sore arm, or that Storer had the toothache over-night. In his admirable essay on Warren Hastings, Lord Macaulay, speaking of the great Governor-General's impeachment, remarks that doubtless in each particular instance a skilful advocate could make a case on his behalf, but that when, through a series of instances, all the footsteps pointed the same way there was but one conclusion to be drawn. The remark applies in the present case, and it is significant that Mr. Stoddart himself should have generously and candidly admitted the thoroughness of our It is perhaps but natural, under defeat.



Mr. A. C. Maclaren.

the circumstances, that the *personnel* of the team should have been called in question. There are but small crumbs of comfort to be gathered in doing so; for the fact remains that the team who sailed with Mr. Stoddart in September comprise the finest English side that has yet played cricket in Australia.

Recently meeting one of the greatest amateur batsmen who has ever delighted the public, I asked him why he no longer played in first-class matches.

He replied, "Nowadays, to be any good, you must do the whole thing—bat, bowl, and field," and he added, with a laugh, "play the piano, too, if necessary." Without going bail for their musical abilities, Mr. Stoddart's side may, as nearly as possible, be held to answer to this

description. Mr. Maclaren and Ranjitsinhji are the two finest batsmen in the world (always excepting the champion himself) and have been so, on any wicket, in any company, any time these three years. The remainder of the side (though neither Board nor Mr. Norman Druce bowl) to all intents and purposes comply with the terms of the requirement. Stoddart himself, like Mr. John Shuter of Surrey fame, is worth his place in any eleven for his gift of captaincy alone. would be idle to suggest that for ten months past he has been at his best as a batsman, but he would be a rash man who would doom to exclusion from a representative side a cricketer of Mr. Stoddart's stamp under the delusion that "he has seen his best days." In the summer of 1882, the saying went forth that our evergreen champion, Mr. W. G. Grace, had joined the ranks of the great "have beens." Thirteen years later the veteran eclipsed all his previous efforts by scoring a thousand runs in the month of May alone. It is good to be reminded at times that it is dangerous to prophesy until you know. It would be an easy matter to defend the selection of each one of Mr. Stoddart's side individually. Mr. Mason, if Mr. Steel, Mr. Maclaren, and possibly Mr. Jackson be excepted, is the best cricketer whom any English public school has produced for twenty Indeed, for some seasons past the vears. Kent county eleven have been spoken of as " Jack Mason and ten others." Mr. Norman Druce stood at the head of the first-class averages. He had played twenty innings and scored nearly a thousand runs. Storer and Board, in addition to being in the front rank as wicket-keepers, would retain their places in a county side as batsmen alone. Of course, it is a matter of notoriety that, both with the bat and the gloves, Storer is Board's superior; but, had an accident occurred to the former, the English team could scarcely have been commiserated for having to fall back upon their second string. Richardson,

Hearne, and Briggs took more wickets in the summer of 1897 than any other five bowlers put together, and are all better batsmen than those who have not played with or against them are apt to imagine. Wainwright and Hirst will stand criticism in any department of the game, and the same may be said, possibly in an increased degree, of Hayward. One is inclined to repeat emphatically that the team that Australia has defeated is, without exception, the very best that has ever met the Colony on its own territory. On the other hand, it cannot be said that our men have played in anything like their best form. Mr. Maclaren and Ranjitsinhji have increased their already great reputations, and the remainder of the side have suffered by contrast. surely this fact ought not to have occasioned all the surprise that has been so freely expressed in this country. It is only the greatest cricketers who rise superior to circumstances which tend to make them stale. The Australians themselves have frequently told us that they feel severely the strain of incessant cricket and travelling in their English tours; and it is a statistical fact, so far as they are concerned, that those of them who have played the least at home in the foregoing winter play the best here in the ensuing summer.

The argument has even greater force when applied to English cricketers. Our climate is, comparatively speaking, bracing to the Australian, and the past few months in the Antipodes have been exceptionally That physical conditions have hot. largely controlled results in Mr. Stoddart's tour may safely be asserted; and the fourth test match—the game which decided our fate-may be quoted as an instance. When the English eleven followed their innings, more than half the batsmen succeeded in getting over twenty runs. The wicket, from all accounts, was then perfect, yet no one on the side made a score of sixty. Mr. Maclaren and Ranjitsinhji contributed forty-seven and fifty-five respectively, but met with defeat just as each was getting into his stride. nically, in addition to these two, four or five of the others were well set when they succumbed. But though heat and staleness were factors in the case, the chief causes of our overthrow were undoubtedly the excellence of our opponents and the tactics which they so successfully adopted. Generally speaking, we have been accustomed to look upon Australian elevens as our equals in bowling, our superiors in fielding, but as below our best standard as batsmen. The history of Mr. Stoddart's tour clearly proves that they have made a great advance in batting, for in the eleven-a-side matches they have scored with unfailing regularity. In fact, from



Mr. A. E. Stoddart.

information has reached that us, with one exception, England has never even "looked like winning" at any time during the course of the last three test matches. For a little over an hour at the commencement of the now memorable "rubber game," Richardson and Hearne, bowling on an over-watered wicket, carried all before Then the ground recovered and Australian supremacy at once reasserted itself. On no other occasion have the Colonial batsmen given the least evidence of failing. Naturally, our attack has been described as appallingly weak, and Richardson has been cited as chief of our bowling failures. Apparently there is no limit to the expectations which some people entertain of a fast bowler. glance at our English records of last summer will show the amount of work which both he and Hearne were called upon to perform. Yet these matters are looked upon as ancient history, and both men are regarded as starting fresh after a winter's rest. Most of us would grumble at being called upon to experience two summers running, even where our occupations were sedentary. Those who have had the privilege of watching these two great professionals bowl day after day at the Oval and Lord's will possibly form a fair opinion of the true meaning of the word " strain."

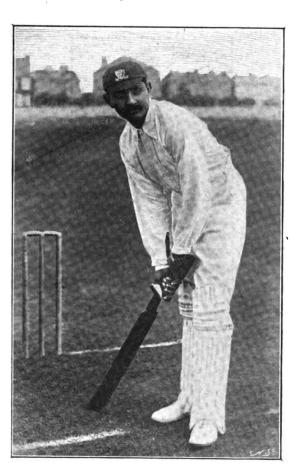
The conditions, too, themselves, under which the game is conducted in Australia, were against them. The habit of playing matches "to a finish" is not so sportsmanlike as it would at first appear to be, and would never recommend itself to English tastes. The inevitable tendency must be to pile up runs, and let the bowling take care of itself. With unlimited time at the disposal of the batsman, it is obvious that no risks must be run, and the tactics employed necessarily become mechanical. It does not follow that a man who scores at the rate of twenty runs an hour, and remains at the wickets for a

day and a half, is not an extremely skilful and scientific player. But this procedure kills enthusiasm, and enthusiasm is the very breath of cricket. The Australians have reduced this method of playing the game to an exact science, and in their own country it is apparently popular enough. But it should not be forgotten that this practice emptied the Trent Bridge Ground in Nottingham, some eight to ten years ago; and, on the other hand, that it was Mr. Walter Read's hitting that first attracted the large crowds which we are now accustomed to see at the Oval. The strictly defensive game is not as easily acquired as many people imagine. majority of Mr. Stoddart's side have, in the course of the tour now in progress, attempted on various occasions to adopt it with but a modicum of success. such great masters as Mr. Maclaren and Ranjitsinhji have felt compelled at times to take a leaf out of their opponents' book, and one may therefore well pause before condemning these methods. other hand, Mr. A. G. Steel, in a classic contribution, informs us that the bat was given us to strike the ball with, and the policy of masterly inactivity cannot fail to be a little irritating to the fielding side as long as man is human; and that consideration is in itself of importance in the best interests of the game. "Perhaps it is a bit heavy—let me hold it for you?" said a sympathetic wicket-keeper to a batsman who had allowed four tempting balls to pass the wicket in succession, his bat reclining gracefully on his shoulder the while. Yet the laws of cricket still regard this individual as "the striker." Surely it is on all occasions more admirable to encounter a difficulty than to evade it. We are most of us familiar with the remark of J. C. Shaw, the great professional bowler of the early 'seventies:

"Are you the better bowler, or is Mr. Grace the better batsman, Shaw?" queried an admirer. "Well, you see it's this way," was the reply: "I puts 'em where I

likes, and 'e puts 'em where 'e likes." It must not be inferred that the Australian batsmen are incapable of hitting freely or of placing the ball. But they have no encouragement to run risks, and it is the running of an occasional risk which delights the thousands of the English

public by whose support and patronage first-class cricket in England alone can live. The memory of the great match at Lord's between Middlesex and Yorkshire, when Sir Tim O'Brien fought both the bowlers and the relentless hands of the clock, is still green with those who saw That it. "crowded hour of glorious life" would be impossible under the Australian system. But other counother tries. manners. Our men thoroughly understood the conditions



Kumar Shri Ranjitsinbji.

under which they were to compete, and Australia is to be heartily congratulated upon her victory, more especially as she lacked the services of her greatest player, the second best all round cricketer in the world—George Giffen. No man is indispensable in any trade, calling, pastime, or profession, and it is good that instances of this truism should be forthcoming from

time to time. Into the dispute between Giffen and the selection committee it is unnecessary to enter. Suffice it to say, he declined to play for Australia, and Australia has achieved without his services that which she has never achieved before with them. Whether his place in

Australian cricket will ever be filled is another question, but the success of McLeod, who was elected to play in his stead, cannot but be gratifying to the Colony. It has been tersely, though perhaps foolishly, remarked that we have been endeavouring to play combined Australia "with two batsmen and no bowler." At any rate, it cannot be said of our victors that they have defeated us by means of any particular individual performance. Their

side has, in the best sense of the term, proved to be that which it purported to be, "Combined Australia." As a batsman, Clement Hill, who has barely attained his legal majority, takes first place, and his innings of 188 in the fourth test match, coming as it did when the game was going against him, says as much for his nerve as for his skill. At

the present moment he is the best lefthanded batsman in the world, though his brother-colonial, Darling and Mr. Francis Ford are in the list of competitors.

Trott's captaincy, too, has been an important factor in the Australian victory. It is an open secret that in some of their English tours the Colonials have not

always been fortunate in the arrangements which they made for generalship. However, the manner in which Trott handled the side which visited this country in 1896 was a matter of universal congratulation.

He has apparently done equally well during Mr. Stoddart's present tour. This is not surprising, for Trott is a rare example of a "bowling captain." Not one in a hundred is there, as a rule, of this genus who does not put himself on to bowl too often or too seldom. The Australian seems to possess an intuitive knack of discovering the golden The fielding of the side has been up to their own form, and more cannot be said. Kelly has kept wicket excellently. He is, of course, not in the same class as

Blackham, but when that great exponent of the art of wicket-keeping comes under consideration it is a case of "eclipse first." Bowling honours have been shared by some half-a-dozen men, a fact which is in itself a proof of the all-round excellence of our opponents; and it may be observed that it is the right-hand medium paced deliveries that have proved the most destructive. Neither Jones or McKibbin have met with the same success that



Storer.

attended their efforts in England, and though none of our own bowlers have a record of which they can be proud, Hearne has done the best. The extremes, therefore, of fast and slow bowling do not seem especially effective on Australian wickets. The defeat of our batsmen, however, has probably been

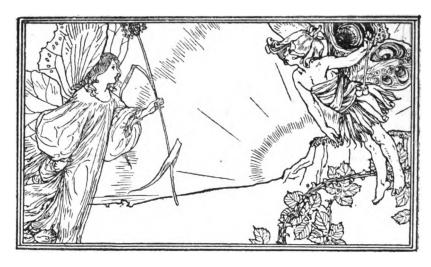
> compassed more by the steadiness of the Australian attack than by the peculiarities of its pace a further instance of Colonial confidence in the waiting game. The question therefore arises, Are the events of the last few months to produce any permanent effect upon English cricket? An intrepid interviewer has informed us that Mr. Stoddart himself has become a convert to the Australian method of playing the game. Let us hope, however, that the statement is merely indicative of the zeal and dexterity with which the interviewer plies his calling, rather than the outcome of anything that Mr. Stoddart has really said. "'E puts 'em all somewheres," said a man in the crowd, some two seasons back at Lord's.

when Mr. Stoddart had hit the third ball in succession to the boundary. And we all applauded lustily the while. Let us express a reverent hope that that great batsman will never adopt, to the disappointment of his admirers, a style that is more suitable to cricketers of inferior calibre. There is no reason why our manners and customs in England should be affected by our present reverse. Once in India I asked my bearer (it is the humour

of the country to denote a native servant a bearer) whether he considered Christianity or Mohammedanism the better religion. I was unwise, for the native is by nature a diplomat; yet even in diplomacy the truth will sometimes "out." He replied, with a low salaam, "Christian very good for master; Mahomet very good for bearer." The paraphrase of the remark will apply in the present instance. Australian game very good for Australia; English game very good for England. And it is with the

interests of English cricket that we are chiefly concerned. Of course we shall be asked to learn, deduce, or evolve a lesson from the present Colonial victory. The task is not a difficult one—unwearied patience, monotonous effort, mechanical methods, the application of the principle of the spot-stroke in billiards to the game of cricket! This is the lesson that the English cricketer may be adjured to learn, and it is to be devoutly hoped that he will meet the request with a point-blank refusal.





GOSSAMERS.

BY PROFESSOR C. H. HERFORD.

FINE films of sunlight woven and dew,
Rainbows and golden gleams,—
As bright thoughts flit and waver through
The woof of dreams,—

The light wind stirs, ye float unseen, It falls, ye twinkle, fade, Changeful as tears and laughter in A little maid.

Over the wayside roses blithe Ye-fling your silken snare, And flaunting captivate the lithe And tameless air.

Across my passing feet and face Unseen ye deftly span Faint wraiths of fingers that caress And wings that fan.

Softly I rend your glossy line, And toss upon the breeze Your idle ardours and your fine Futilities. But still the airy rank unites,
And still fresh phantom hosts
Beset me, and I strive with flights
Of glimmering ghosts.

In such a web our lives we lead,
Entangled with all things that are,
Subtly enwoven with the weed
And with the star.

Heedless we dare the soft reproof
Of ties that clasp but not enthrall,
Whose airy arches are no roof,
Whose woof no wall.

Yet, soon or late, some magic hour Of Music, tranced in her cell, Or Love, enraptured in his bower, Shall with strong spell

Set flashing through the gloom that glows
That viewless woof in rhythmic flight,
And round the World into a rose
Of fire and light,





THE IDLERS' CLUB.

MY DEFINITION OF PATRIOTISM.

BY JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M.P., LADY JEUNE, GRANT ALLEN, ARNOLD GOLSWORTHY, AND ARTHUR H. LAWRENCE.



Y definition of Patriotism? Let me see—what is it? I have seen Patriotism define itself now and then in such very ugly forms that I am rather

Mr. Justin McCarthy, M.P., is opposed to Jingoism.

inclined to adopt a negative sort of reply, and say, at least, in the beginning, what my definition of Patriotism is not rather than what it is. My definition of Patriotism is certainly not Jingoism, not by any means the sort of thing which would

be likely to win tumultuous applause if sung at the top of a loud voice in a music-hall. My definition of Patriotism would not describe the kind of emotion which glorifies whatever my country does, be it right or be it wrong. If that sort of thing is Patriotism, then the great Lord Chatham was not a patriot, because he publicly declared that he could welcome a reverse to British arms in the American War of Independence, in the hope that it might bring England to her senses, and give her time to reflect that there was a principle of justice to be considered, in the first instance, before taking up arms. Yet, I think, if I were an Englishman, I should consider Lord Chatham's ideas of Patriotism quite good enough and patriotic enough for me. I never have been convinced that Patriotism consists in an impassioned desire for the acquisition of new territory at any cost of life and of the principles expounded in the Decalogue. I refuse to admire a man for no other reason than because he has added estate to estate and dispossessed the former occupants. He may become a very rich man, and a very powerful man in this way; and he may be a very nice man to meet in private life; but I altogether decline to fall down and worship him, or to admit that he has any Divine commission for the acquisition of his neighbour's land. My idea of Patriotism is that a man should love his own country beyond any other; that he should strive his very best for the prosperity of her people; and that, if he be an Englishman, he should think of the welfare of England before he concerns himself about the welfare of Borrioboola Gha. I have observed, too, that according to the thinking of many otherwise intelligent and reasonable men, that which in the Englishman is but a patriotic word, is in the Irishman rank blasphemy. Therefore, I am for living and for letting live in the matter of Patriotism; and for the principle which applies to one country being cheerfully allowed to apply also to every other country. I cannot think, for example, that what is a virtue in an Englishman can be quite a vice in a Frenchman, a German, or an Italian. Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, and other peoples do, undoubtedly, run their Patriotism into something like a vice now and then; but so do we, most of us, at times. I do not think that Mr. James Russell Lowell was any the less of a patriot because, through the humorous lips of Hosea Biglow, he denounced the policy which led to the Texan War. He was admonishing his countrymen to be just and fear not—nothing more. I think Patriotism, to be true, must recognise that there is a higher law than even that of love of country—the law of justice.

Lady Jeune gives instances.

Patriotism, the highest virtue of citizenship, has become a much wider and more comprehensive quality than it was regarded in the past times when the noblest and best example of the attribute was embodied in a willingness to die for one's country, either in her

defence or at her command, and we are far from saying that those who shed their blood in such a cause were not perhaps among its greatest heroes, and have greater claim to be considered patriots in the present sense of the word than those who only practice the more prosaic virtues, which are not magnified by the applause of their countrymen into superhuman actions. The career of a soldier has perhaps a greater attraction, and embodies the ideal of a patriot's life better, than any other example. The abnegation of self, the obligatory obedience, the stern discipline, which characterises the soldier's career, are the points which appeal most strongly to the imagination, and which through all ages have been regarded as the highest example of Patriotism, and in the deeds of English soldiers and the history of her Army are found some of the most striking and glorious examples of what love of country and duty In the history of our Empire there are records of deeds which stop our heart's wild beating and bring tears to our eyes, of men who had only one thought, the glory of their country, and the greatness of England has been built up by men who gave their life and their blood in her defence. Their memory will never die, hallowed as it is by the sacred story of their courage, and their lives are still the incentive of Englishmen all over the world, where they are fighting and striving as their fathers before them, sacrificing life, health, and pleasure to carry on their work.

We believe the feeling of Patriotism is more powerful than ever, though it has developed in other ways, and modern life gives fresh opportunities for the exercise of virtues which, in their way, are as beneficial and glorious as any deed of military prowess. English men and women are all more impressed than formerly by a sense of responsibility, to which the greater riches and better education of to-day has given birth. The desire to improve the conditions of life among the poorer classes, the struggle against intemperance, the vigilant onslaught on vice, the legislation for the protection of life, and especially for that of the children, the battle which science is waging against disease and suffering are all the outcome of modern sentiment, which we call humanitarianism, but which is in reality a love of country, which feeling finds an outlet in a passionate desire to make our nation great and strong by making the lives of the people happier and purer.

Among men and women in England there are thousands leading lives of devotion and self-sacrifice as brave and fearless as any soldier. The nurse who goes into the homes of sickness, the clergyman who lives among the helpless and hopeless poor of our large towns, and who makes his life like theirs, their joys and sorrows his own, the missionary who goes forth to preach the gospel of love to those who know of naught

but passion and sin, in fact the great army of workers who give their lives to improve and beautify the lives of the sad and weary ones of the earth, whose only thought and occupation is a constant battle against evil and its consequences, are surely patriots in the higher sense of the word, spending their life in the service of their country and striving to make her people better and purer, and by so doing increasing her glory and greatness.

If Patriotism means "Our country, right or wrong," then Mr. Grant Allen Patriotism is clearly nothing more than a form of selfishness. It takes a broad is in this sense that I have often called it "a vulgar vice." Such crude Patriotism is merely one of the many modes of the monopolist instinct. There is, of course, a higher and truer kind of Patriotism; but then, the people who display this kind are generally twitted by the vulgar and selfish "patriots" with being unpatriotic. A true patriot, in any good sense of the word, is a man who, finding himself born into a particular community, and, therefore to some slight extent, sharing the responsibility of its corporate acts, desires to see the community of which he is a member behave always in the most upright and honourable manner. If his country did so behave, he might naturally be proud of her; unfortunately, countries in the concrete oftener give one cause for shame and If such a man could see his land striving, not to find new markets for her iron and her cotton by unjust aggression, not to slaughter helpless savages at the instigation of her merchants, not to force opium or gin on unwilling lower races, but to act with such scrupulous justice that her name should be a synonym for fair dealing among the nations, then, indeed, he might be justly glad he belonged to her; But if she does wrong, a true patriot ought to raise his voice against that wrong, even if it enriches her millionaires, and gives congenial employment to her major-generals. Your true patriot would even desire to see his country defeated and humbled whenever she embarked on a course of oppression; he would desire to see her stripped of squalid dependencies which sap her manhood and degrade her moral sense; he would long to save her from the fate of the later Roman Empire, to which every modern state Better, for example, a free England, made great by industry, is so eagerly aspiring. honour, virtue, manliness, literature, science, and (if she can ever evolve it) art, than an England which holds half the world in slavery, which crushes revolts on a thousand frontiers, which sends forth crowds of filibusters to South Africa and New Guinea, which wastes her efforts in military enterprises, doomed in the end to bring their inevitable retribution of national decadence. Empire has always destroyed every country that held it, because empire is only a masked name for slavery, and slavery is far more killing and debasing for the master than for the slave. What a true patriot would wish to see is not "a little England," but a great England; what he will always remember is that a great England and a big England are mutually contradictory. No country can be great which enslaves others. Greatness is a moral not a physica quality.

There are so many mistaken ideas about on the subject of Patriotism that I gladly welcome the opportunity of emphasising the authorised version. Some people have got hold of the ridiculous idea that Patriotism means trying to improve the welfare of your fellow-countrymen morally and socially and all that kind of nonsense, don't you know, and to leave off blustering about the shooting powers of your country's Navy. I know a man who even says that you can't love your country sincerely unless you waste a lot of valuable time, in which you might be making money, the effort of seeing that your country's laws are just and that one class of the community does not prey upon another by special Act of Parliament. No wonder the authorities are talking about running up a few more lunatic asylums, eh? As if any sane man could afford to let his Patriotism interfere with his business! Long ago,

I admit, I was sinful enough to wonder why the man without "a stake in the country should be expected to be as patriotic as the man with several stakes. But that was only a youthful heresy which I have long since lived down. I can see clearly now that the Patriotism of the man with something to lose is just the same pure gold as that of the Sansculotte. I have had it all explained to me by a man who owns a lot of land, and wants to see a noble patriotic spirit growing up in the young men of this generation, so that they can go and push back the foreign invader from acquiring my friend's property. I was once immeasurably shocked to hear a poor man out of work asking why he should be expected to take an interest in a country in which he was He even suggested that if the country were annexed by the Germans tomorrow, he could not be worse off. This is such a really low-down example of want of Patriotism that I feel I ought to apologise for mentioning it. That's the worst of these people. They are always thinking of their own paltry bread-and-butter instead of chipping in magnanimously and helping someone else to make a fortune or to satisfy the ambition of a lifetime by becoming Prime Minister. The mere glory of being an Englishman and of being permitted to work to produce luxuries for the rest of us, ought to be enough to satisfy a right-minded working-man. I do not want to propose harsh measures, but something will really have to be done soon with people who hold views of this kind. It was only the other day that some fellow got up and said that England could raise enough food to provide a square meal for 200 millions of people if—if the landlords wouldn't mind losing a little of their rent! Patriotism is all very well, but to ask the most patriotic section of the community to forgo a bit of their incomes just for the glory of the thing seems to me to be a trifle cool. True Patriotism consists, of course, in voting for a good army and and a large navy, so that nobody can stop our food-supplies from reaching the shop at the bottom of the street. If we don't do that our prestige as a nation will be gone, and several patriots in the City will be out of pocket over the deal. Instead of making cotton and battleships and other dry goods for foreign nations, we should have to grow more wheat, and a child knows that there's no money in wheat—not enough, anyhow, to enable a chap to wear diamonds, and a superior look that money cannot buy. Let us ignore these wicked ideas and foster the spirit of Patriotism in our midst, with plenty of brass bands and men in tin armour and that kind of thing, to show the people that Truth is mighty and will prevail, or something of that sort.

Arthur Lawrence looks for wings.

In the lace of such a question as this one looks round for wings, for the purpose of maintaining a flight which shall put the sun-gazing eagle to shame, or if, even in fancy, one prefers to remain on firm earth, one regrets the absence of a leonine outfit,

and the consequent inability to give vent to a roar which shall shake the forest, make

the jackals feel hungry, and cause the hyena to scream.

Personally, I think the question is an exceedingly puzzling one. There are so many kinds of Patriotism going about that one is mystified as to which type one shall choose for one's own personal adornment. There is the Irish patriot, for example, and I have also come across Patriotism of a particularly powerful Scotch blend. Then there is the negative Patriotism, which consists solely in a hearty contempt and hatred for all alien races, the Germans being, at present, the best favoured in this respect. There is also the blatant self-declared Patriotism, which is generally the undisputed possession of the man from whom all the other virtues and graces have obviously long since departed. "England for ever!" he exclaims, and then adds, gazing upon you meanwhile with drunken ferocity, "I'm an Englishman!" as if he expected you to feel a sympathetic pride in the fact.

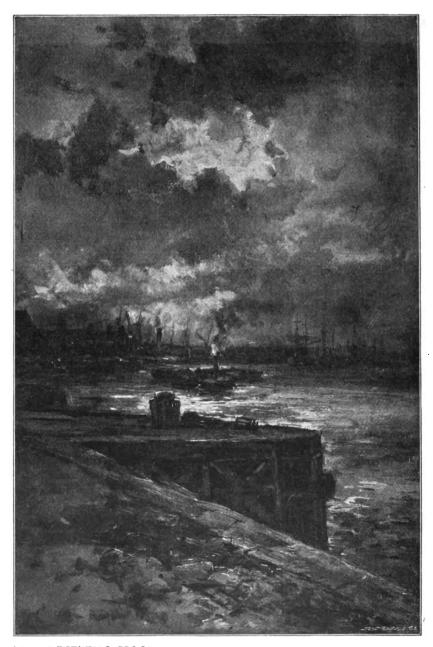
If one may be content with a mere dictionary definition—"the love of one's country"—I should add that it is a virtue which can only be evidenced by self-sacrifice. To take an example: if a man, after successfully escaping income-tax, which, lawfully, he should have paid into the Exchequer, does afterwards proceed to pay up arrears, not on demand, nor as a tribute to an unwieldy conscience but simply because he

wishes his beloved country to benefit by the treasure, then I imagine that man to be possessed of a rare and genuine Patriotism. No man is a patriot who thinks well of his country because he was born in it. Such a notion savours of egotism and presents a point of view which must often strike the friends of the patriot as being rather hard lines on his country. "Breathes there a man with a soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, this is my own, my native land? If such there be, go, mark him well——" and when the flagellation is over, erect a monument to his memory, for modesty is the rarest of virtues, and no man should insult his country with praise because it has given him birth. Some of my would-be patriotic friends are requested to consider this well. As germane to the discussion I might also point out to those friends that my own notion of Patriotism is so different, and so superior to theirs, and is something so subtle, and so indefinably exquisite and soul-stirring, that there are no words which could give it appropriate expression!





[&]quot;You're the biggest thief in the city, sir."
"Ah, mein friend, but you do not mein partner know."



THE DRIFTING MOON.

Drawn by W. Arthur Rouse.

THE JOLER



APRIL



Y misunderstanding with Douglas made me miserable enough, for I loved him well though I was offended and angry with him.

There can be no worse offence, under certain circumstances, than to disclaim jealousy; and that is what Douglas had done. Well, I would at any rate give him a good cause for jealousy. Who could tell? if the plant were watered, it might grow. True, there was as yet no plant to be seen; but so it is when the seeds are deeply rooted in the earth, yet by watering and careful nourishing they are made to appear above the surface.

I should water Douglas with Katkoff and with Naryshkin, he should see at any rate that I was no longer a child, and that others might be attracted by me if he would not.

Little fool and blind that I was! little moth that played with the light, and found it fire, and burned her wings!

Nevertheless, possibly no harm would have come of it all, had it not been for Olga Naryshkin. Olga came home one day and said:

"I see, Elsa, that you have outlived your infancy and have become in your

"How so?" I asked surprised, gratified that she should insinuate I was a child no longer, but puzzled nevertheless by her speech.

"Well, you have learned at least that men are men!" she said laughing.

"On the contrary, I knew long ago, and I know still better now, that most men are fools," said I.

"Oh, oh!" cried Olga, "you are unkind, Elsa; and, besides, I have observed one or two who are men enough to set you a-blushing."

"Any fool can make a girl blush," I said, "if he be unmanly enough."

"Ah, well, manly or unmanly, you seem to like Katkoff, for one!" laughed Olga; "my brother is quite jealous of him."

"Oh, I may like him well enough," I said, gratified, like the little fool I was, to hear that I had inspired jealousy. if your brother is jealous—jealous he must be."

"Well, well, love is very sweet!" sighed Olga; "I have known it myself." Olga was the most terrible little flirt that ever bewildered the male sex. "Katkoff is not one who is likely to allow the grass to grow under his feet; he is a bold lover, and a rapid one."

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"And what may that mean?" I asked. Olga laughed.

"It means that he is one of those who makes love headlong; he loses no time in sighs and soft speeches, but goes steadily forward until the beleaguered castle capitulates."

"Better that than starve within the lines for want of a little love!" I said foolishly, laughing with her.

"Well, I am glad to hear it," said Olga; "for, to say truth, this is not the place for children fresh from the nursery, and I would rather see you in love than not."

" Did I say I was in love?" I laughed.

"Does anyone say so?" she retaliated.

"Besides, I do not think Katkoff is a marrying man," I added. Olga burst out laughing.

"No, nor I," she said, "but one never knows; he might be obliging, for your sake; it is worth trying if you feel disposed that way."

I laughed very much over this conversation after Olga and I had parted. It was a good joke to think that one who had known, and who, alas! loved, Douglas could ever feel "disposed" towards marrying the impetuous Katkoff. Katkoff would do very well to play off against Douglas; but as for falling in love with so rough a personage as this Russian bear, God forbid, he would be the last person of all the men I knew that I should fall in love with.

Nevertheless, I think Olga must have repeated the substance of our conversation to Katkoff himself, giving him to understand that the little fortress Elsa von Adlerberg lay at the mercy of the guns of his fascinations, for he began from this time to assume towards me a new attitude, a kind of languishing familiarity which was quite odious to me. I was not afraid of him, partly because, perhaps, I was hardly as yet so much as acquainted with the flavour of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and therefore did

not understand or suspect evil designs; and partly because I knew well that he would not dare to take any kind of liberty in the palace of the Grand Duchess, and that I was therefore safe. I took care to keep away from him when out of Sanctuary.

Occasionally Douglas saw me talking and laughing with Katkoff as he came through our anteroom with a message from the Prince to the Princess; for, little as there was in common between my mistress and her husband, the Prince, nevertheless, both now and at all times, made a practice of asking her advice whenever he found himself in difficulty of any kind. Douglas would glance at us, and his face would lengthen and his eyes glower, but he would say nothing.

Once—it was, I think, on my seventeenth birthday—Douglas made me a strange but beautiful present. He met me in the grounds, and gave me joy of my birthday, asking if all were well with me. He looked grieved and sad, and I could not resist saying that I should feel happier if he were to wear a brighter appearance, as in old days. Did anything ail him?

I hoped he would tell me that he loved me, and was distressed because I appeared to prefer Katkoff. But he started upon a different tack.

"I weary of this Court, both for myself and you, Elsa," he said. "My master—God forgive me—is a helpless fool, and I take little delight in serving him, though to serve him I shall continue, having put my hand to the plough. Besides, I could not leave you here and depart, that is out of the question. You are in the midst of dangers, Elsa."

"I am not afraid of them," I said.

"Because possibly you do not realise or understand them," he said; "you will not be persuaded to return home to Zerbst?"

"Oh! no," I said maliciously; "I am very happy here."

"God keep you so," he continued.

Still not a word of jealousy. "Now see, Elsa, I have a present for you—it is a silver Circassian dagger, to be worn in the bosom of your dress. You are not afraid of dangers I know; but will you take my word for it that they exist, and, for my sake, arm yourself continually with this?"

"Oh! very well," I laughed. It was a beautiful little weapon, sharp and keen, and sheathed in silver, worked with devices in the Circassian mode. "But what are the dangers against which it is to protect me?"

"There is one that lurks too constantly about you, Elsa," said Douglas, flushing; "one whose name is Katkoff, against whom I have warned you before this."

"Because he is your enemy he need not be mine," I said boldly. "It is not noble to abuse a man because you do not like him."

"He is not my enemy at present," replied Douglas gravely, "but it is possible that he may become so. As for me, I care nothing for him one way or the other; for your sake I do not trust him."

"You are very good," I said. "To me he is all that is attentive and kind; never grave and surly, like——" I could not resist saying this much; but I stopped short without finishing the sentence. Douglas glanced quickly at me.

"Nay, I am sorry if I am that, Elsa," he said; "we were wont to be better friends; meanwhile I will try to be less the grave guardian, if only you will promise to give me less cause for anxiety."

"I will wear your dagger," I said, "and you shall wear a cheerful countenance."

Douglas smiled.

"Nevertheless, be careful, I entreat you, dear Elsa, for the sake of those who love you."

"My parents are not anxious on my account," I said.

"There are others to whom you are dear, nearer this place," said Douglas,

"There is Naryshkin, who likes me

well enough," I said mischievously, for I longed to draw him on to say more, "and there is Katkoff, who vows that he loves me-----

"Katkoff!" repeated Douglas, starting to his feet. "Katkoff! That man and love have nothing in common. Do not profane the sacred name of love, Elsa, by mentioning it together with his."

"I did not say I loved him," I said, a little frightened.

"Oh! thank God, I never suspected you of such a thing!" cried Douglas. "I would not so insult you as to suppose it possible."

He left me after this, and I returned to the house, where I sat and sighed and mused. Douglas was too proud and too noble to be jealous. He would not believe in my fooling with Katkoff; whether he loved me or not was still an unanswered question. I was no nearer a solution than before.

Olga caught me sighing, and I heard her tell Protasova presently that poor Elsa was hopelessly in love.

"She need not sigh for long," said Protasova, and Olga laughed.

Alas, if matters proceeded no more hopefully than now, I might sigh all my life! Olga and the others might give tongue upon a false scent if they liked; I should do nothing to put them upon the true. Douglas was too sacred a subject to mention in the presence of these people; he dwelt enthroned in my heart of hearts, and was for me alone and for my most cherished thoughts. Let them think what they would; if it pleased them to suppose that I sighed for Katkoff—let them suppose it.

That evening Olga asked me to go for her into the village, which lay without the boundaries of the park. One of the waiting-women was sick and unable to attend at the palace, and Olga begged me to find out what ailed her, and to see that some other serf-girl were sent up in her place if she were likely to be absent long.

I was glad to go; for occasionally, I knew, Douglas walked during the summer evenings in the park, and I hoped to meet him.

And as I went I did see a man strolling towards me, and I thought for a moment it was Douglas, and prepared myself to keep within bounds that rather too exuberant joy which I always felt at sight of him.

But to my disappointment I saw that it was Katkoff.

CHAPTER X.

I drew back a little, for I did not feel inclined to meet this man; there was no reason for a polite attitude towards him, since Douglas was not by to be made jealous.

"Ah, little Countess Elsa!" said Katkoff, speaking French, as we always did. "So Olga was faithful and you were kind, and I am happier than I dared to hope."

"I don't know what you mean!" I said, disinclined to take the trouble of attempting to understand. "I am on my way to the village."

"Oh, coy, coy!" said Katkoff languishingly; "did not Olga give you my message?"

"Certainly not!" I said. "Do not stand in the way. I must pass onwards to my business."

"It is no shame to have listened to the voice of true love," persisted Katkoff, not moving by a hair's-breadth from my way.

"Explain, or let me pass!" I said, "or else explain as we go, for go I must, whether you allow me to walk alone or accompany me."

"Confess, little witch, that Olga gave you my message," said Katkoff, edging a little from the path to allow me to come, and walking by my side, much too close to be agreeable to me.

"I tell you I have had no message," I repeated, angrily, "and desire none!"

"Oh, oh! lovers are allowed to fib," he said, laughing unpleasantly. "Come, we

will say no more about it; you have come, and that is the main point. So long as the end is accomplished the manner of bringing about that end matters little. Ivan has departed to the village with his wife; there is a Saint's Day celebration this evening, and the lodge is empty." I laughed.

"Really, Monsieur le Lieutenant," I said, "you must expound your riddles, or you cannot expect to be understood. Also, there is scarcely room for two on the path together. I should be grateful if you would walk behind me or in front."

"You piquante little witch," he said, "you drive me beside myself!" He seized me with the words, and held me tightly to him, kissing me a many times about the face before I could struggle out of his arms. When I did so I was trembling and panting with rage.

"You viper!" I said; "if you do such a thing again, I will show you that I have a sting also!"

"Fie," he cried, "love should be lavish of love-gifts:"

"There is no question of either love or gifts!" I snapped, and, fumbling for my weapon, I started to go quickly on my way.

Katkoff followed, saying some foolishness as he went about promises made and taken back again. I turned round instantly and headed for the palace. He did the same. I faced him.

"Which way lies your road?" I asked.

"Straight to your sweet heart," he said, opening his arms as though to embrace me. I now had my Circassian dagger in my hand—how I thanked God and Douglas for it!

"Take care!" I said, "I am very serious."

"Tush for your seriousness," he replied angrily, "I can be serious too. Come, an end to this foolery. I am not to be cheated of my pleasure. What! you would surrender and then show fight again when the conqueror marches in? Fie, these are not

the rules of war and of love. Come, throw that thing away, and let us wander peacefully together as lovers should."

"Lovers!" I hissed. "The devil goes a-wooing when you play the lover. When I have a lover he shall be a better man than you, Katkoff, or I will starve for one first."

This made him very angry, and he struck at my little dagger, which I held ostentatiously before me, but he did not succeed in knocking it out of my hand.

Nevertheless I grew frightened, for I did not relish a stand-up fight with a big strong guardsman in the midst of this lonely overgrown park at late evening.

I screamed and struck at him, but he avoided the blow, and seized my wrist. I shook him off, and it then became a tussle for possession of the weapon. I would have stabbed him if I could, but he was clever in the avoiding of my thrusts and blows, and presently he knocked the dagger out of my hand.

"Now I have you, you see!" he said. But I took to my heels and ran; fear lent me wings, and I sped as I had never sped before, though I was always accounted a good runner as well as rider at Zerbst. But I do not think Katkoff followed me though I never looked round It was dusk however, and there were clumps of aspen and birch cover, behind which I dodged and ran, so it is quite possible he may have started to follow me, but soon lost sight of me. any rate I escaped, and rushed back to the palace and into our anteroom; there sat Olga reading or working. She saw that I was flushed and breathless.

"Why! what is it, Elsa?" she said. "Have you seen ghosts?"

I took no notice of the girl, but walked straight past her to the door which leads to the reception-rooms of the Grand Duchess.

"You can't go in," said Olga, "her Highness is engaged. What is the matter, Elsa?" "I will not speak to you," I said. "If the Grand Duchess will not see me I will go to the Tsarevitch. You shall suffer for this, Olga Naryshkin."

"I?" exclaimed Olga, who certainly seemed to feel a genuine surprise, if one might judge by her looks. "What have I done?"

"You have plotted with this man, or devil, Katkoff, against my honour. Is that nothing?"

"On my soul I have not, Elsa; if he said so he lied. I may be unscrupulous, but I would not do that. What did he say? Did he accuse me?"

"He gave me to understand that you sent me to meet him in response to some loathsome message from himself."

"Well, it is a lie," said Olga, "I swear it; he knew that you were going across the park, and that only by accident. I would not have him interfere with you against your will, before heaven I would not, Elsa!"

"Very well," I said, "then I believe you."

"Did he—did you escape his attentions?" she pursued.

"He is alive and so am I—that is sufficient answer," I said. Olga seemed to desire to smile, but resisted the inclination.

"You take it to heart dreadfully," she said. "I am very glad you escaped the man. He is a fool to have made such a mistake."

"He will find that out, and soon enough. I am going to the Grand Duke, Olga. Now, at once!"

"The Grand Duke will want you to play cards," said Olga; "he will not listen to your tale, and if he did he would only laugh and do nothing."

"I shall find one there who will neither laugh nor sit still," I said.

"And who may that be? One of his gallant Holsteiners. Be wise, Elsa, and let well alone. The Grand Duchess will not like it! Complain to her afterwards, if you



I would have stabbed him if I could.

like, but don't complicate matters by appealing to the enemy's camp."

"I will see Count Douglas von Doppelheim before I am half an hour older," I said stoutly. "He is my guardian; I have a right to go to him for protection."

"Oh—h!" exclaimed Olga, "so that is how the cat jumps. Upon my word, little Countess Elsa, you are not quite so ingenuous as I supposed. Does the Grand Duchess know of this Count Douglas?"

"There is nothing to know," I said, blushing; "and I wish I had not mentioned his name if you must needs make silly conclusions. The Grand Duchess is aware that my parents appointed him a kind of informal guardian over me. There is nothing else between us."

"And that is why you blush when you speak of him?" laughed Olga. "Oh, Elsa! Well, I have seen the Count, and he is a handsome fellow. Keep him out of the way of the Grand Duchess, if you are wise, after Poniatofsky has gone—as go he must before long."

"You are a fool, Olga," I said, angrily.
"The Count is, as I say, my guardian. He cares no more for me than for yourself.
I—I do not mind saying that I would it were otherwise. But he is my guardian, at any rate, and to him I must go in this trouble. To whom else?"

"Listen, Elsa; be wise and remain at home. The Grand Duchess will admonish this Katkoff; he shall not worry you again. But he is a guardsman and a strong partisan. We-that is the Grand Duchesscannot afford to quarrel with the guards. On the contrary, we are moving heaven and earth to obtain by degrees a strong following ready for emergencies. I dare say you know this already. At present we are only beginning. Now, what would this German knight of yours do with Katkoff if you were to tell him-well-what happened to-night (which, by-the-bye, you have not told me, though I am dying to hear it)?"

"Douglas would kill the beast," I said fervently. Olga laughed.

"He might," she said, "but Katkoff would make a fight of it. We Russians are not quite helpless, you know; and what if he killed your Douglas? Eh! that goes home, I see——"

"He never could, except by treachery," I said with patriotic disdain.

"Well," continued Olga, "it is better to risk nothing; no good could come of a quarrel. Let it rest, Eisa—be wise. The Grand Duchess will see that you are safe in future."

At this moment the door opened, and her Highness appeared, the Polish ambassador following. He took his departure, having whispered something to the Grand Duchess at the threshold of the farther door.

"Now," said Catherine, returning to us, "I have heard the raised voices. What is it?"

"I am persuading the Countess to be moderate in her wrath, Highness," said Olga; "she has been grossly insulted by a lover."

"Ah! it is foolish to be angry with those we love," said Catherine, smiling kindly at me.

"But I do not love him, I hate him!" I exclaimed, all my wrath returning.

"Oh, oh! and who is this unfortunate?" laughed the Grand Duchess.

"Katkoff, of the Preobrajensky," exclaimed Olga. "He has been too ardent in his advances, which Elsa refused to receive, her heart being devoted to another."

"Well, well," said Catherine, smiling kindly and tapping my cheek, "you must forgive him, Elsa; we should be lenient towards those who love us."

"I would kill him if I could," I said; "but since I cannot I intend to ask some one to punish him who can do so." I saw Olga dart me a warning look, but I took no notice of it, I was all angry again.

"Fie, fie, little vixen!" laughed Cathe-

rine, "do we breed such tiger-cats at dreary little Zerbst? And who, pray, is to be your champion? Some knight to be sent for from Anhalt?"

"No, no, she jests, Highness. Elsa will let the matter rest; it is not worth raising trouble for. Shall I attend your Highness?"

"No, Olga, I will speak," I said. "I have a guardian, Highness, who will insist upon punishing this vile person for me, when he hears my story."

The manner of the Grand Duchess underwent a sudden change.

"What! a gentleman of the Tsarevitch to brawl with one of my guardsmen, and for a mere lover's quarrel with a little fool like you, Elsa, for heroine? Go to bed, minx, and dream of better wisdom. Lord! Katkoff should carry off every lady of the Court before I would offend a single guardsman! Will you give me your parole, or shall I have you placed under arrest? Come! your answer!"

The Princess stamped and looked so furious that I lost heart at once, and promised to say nothing to Douglas. And so, for the present, the matter ended.

CHAPTER XI.

Needless to say, I avoided the society of Katkoff after this episode, which showed me the man's intention in its true colours as it concerned myself. Nevertheless, I was unable to keep myself entirely out of his way, since—being a member of the small party of the Grand Duchess-he was occasionally present at the meetings of that party, which took place at rare intervals, nowin her Highness' apartments in the Palace, now in other rendezvous specially arranged. At our first meeting after my adventure he had the effrontery to address me, expressing the hope that I had long since repented of my "cruelty," as he had forgiven it.

"I will speak to you this one time," I said, "Mr. Officer, and afterwards never again. I do not repent anything excepting

that I failed to punish you as you deserved."

"Oh, cruel, cruel!" he said, leering; "you will learn to treat more kindly the pleadings of true love."

"Do not profane the sacred word," I said, stamping my foot at him; "it is shocking to me to hear such a word from your lips. It is fortunate for you that you serve my mistress, else you had been made to answer for your offence!"

"Oh, oh! Some German champion, no doubt!" he sneered. I turned my back upon him, and that was the beginning and end of my communications with this man for many a long day.

The Grand Duchess repented, it seems, of her harshness towards me on that first night after Katkoff's insult in the park. For on the following morning her Highness was all kindness. She honoured me by sending for me while still abed, in order to make smooth the rough edges of our conversation on the previous night.

"It was necessary to be firm with you, Elsa," she said; "for, as you will admit, in the foolishness of your excitement you might otherwise have easily stirred up strife, and this would have been disastrous, at the present moment, to our growing cause, which is now in the position of a young and delicate plant, and must not be trampled."

I bowed, but said nothing; for in truth I was very sore, as yet, by reason of my treatment of the preceding night, and of the scant sympathy shown me by the Grand Duchess.

"Come, admit it," she said, smiling.

"I have promised obedience to your wishes, Highness," I hesitated. "The child that is scolded and whipped cannot be expected to admit the wisdom of its punishment."

"Well, you will be wiser one day," she said, rather more coldly, "and meanwhile remember that there can be no pitting together of my adherents and those of the Tsarevitch. If you do not

understand that, then perhaps you will understand this, that if any secrets of our camp were betrayed to their camp, I would not answer for the life of the betrayer. There are certain forces which I cannot control if I would."

"I am no tale-bearer, Highness," I said, flushing.

"That I believe," she said, more gently. "Forgive me, Elsa. I did not suspect your good faith, but your good sense; you must not act impulsively—that is what I would impress. You are angry with this guardsman. When you are older you will find that all men are much the same—all men of this class. You are pretty, and are sure to be persecuted with attentions; you must give no encouragement, which means no excuse."

"At least protect me from this man's attentions in future, Highness," I said, bursting into tears; "if I was friendly with him up to yesterday, it was in unsuspicion and ignorance. I have been punished for it. I may not appeal to my guardian for protection. Must I, then, continue to suffer persecution unprotected?"

"Poor child," said Catherine, kindly; "can you not love this man?"

"Oh, God forbid!" I said, shuddering.
"Not if he were the only man in the world."

The Grand Duchess laughed. "Well, well, little one," she said, "I will see whether I can persuade Katkoff to transfer his affections to another. Lord! girl, there are many that would be glad of the attentions you are rejecting! He is a fine man, this Preobrajensky!"

"They are welcome to him," I said, with a grimace. "For Heaven's sake, Highness, let them have him!"

"Perhaps he will not persecute you again," she laughed; "meanwhile bear all things, if need be, for the cause; in the end you will receive the reward of devotion. Now, help me out of bed, child."

It appeared to me that her Highness

would exact from her partisans a degree of devotion which was scarcely reasonable, if she expected of us to bear with such treatment as Katkoff had offered to me; but I hoped for relief at her hands, and not without ground; for, for a considerable while I had no further trouble with the guardsman who, seeing that I avoided and would not hold any communication with him, now left me alone when we met, and made no attempt to converse with me.

It must not be supposed that, great as was their mutual dislike, the Grand Duchess and her husband never saw one another; on the contrary, they met frequently, and even-for the sake of appearances — occasionally dined or supped together, their suites meeting on such occasions and intermingling in a perfectly friendly manner. The Grand Duchess did her best to conceal her contempt for her husband when in his presence, and to converse with him as though she considered him her intellectual equal, which, of course, she never did. As for the Prince, he made no attempt to be other than he was—a poor, ill-educated, clownish person of scant intelligence, who loved to browbeat and laugh at his immeasurably superior wife on every possible opportunity, even before the courtiers. erine, it must be admitted, displayed the most marvellous good temper and patience; and when, as he frequently did, he appealed seriously to her for advice she never failed to counsel him as kindly and good-humouredly as though he had not, likely enough, insulted her but a moment before.

Neither did the Grand Duchess display ill-humour when, as I have known him do, the Tsarevitch actually brought a regiment of tin soldiers into her Highness' bedroom at night, and kept her awake until full morning expounding the manœuvres and evolutions of these warriors, whom he exercised upon a huge tray on the very bed in which she lay,

neither resting himself nor allowing her to sleep.

It was at the end of this summer that the infant Princess, the daughter of the Grand Duchess, was born. The Grand Duke had been carousing this night, and hearing of the birth of the Princess, he affected the greatest delight. Decked out in his most resplendent uniform he presently appeared at the bedside of the newly-delivered Grand Duchess, whom he greatly scared by instantly turning out nurses and attendants at the sword's point, and himself mounting guard alone over his wife's bed, protesting very loudly and boisterously that it was his duty to see personally to the safety of the Imperial House.

With great difficulty the Grand Duke was persuaded, after an hour of this inconsiderate foolery, during which the poor Grand Duchess and her child might not enjoy the ministrations of doctors or attendants, to quit the room and return to his own apartments.

What the mind of the Tsarevitch may have been in carrying out this extraordinary and fantastic freak is known for certain to none, but it was open to all to conjecture if they would, and there were many opinions expressed upon the point.

The incident caused great offence to many of Catherine's adherents, and it was undoubtedly the origin of an episode which might have proved a historical tragedy, and in which, as it happened, both Douglas and I were directly or indirectly concerned.

There was a young guardsman named Ootine, a most devoted adherent and personal admirer of the Grand Duchess. This youth was roused to great fury by the inhuman conduct, as he called it, of the Tsarevitch; and, in the ill-advised belief that he would thereby benefit his adored Grand Duchess, he determined to rid her once for all of her detestable spouse, not considering that in so doing

he would be doing her no benefit, indeed, but the most irreparable of injuries.

I was walking in the gardens in Oranienbaum one afternoon, when I saw Douglas following me quickly from the palace.

I waited for him, glad enough to see him, for, as a matter of fact, I wished for nothing more delightful than that Douglas should come out and join me, which he did sometimes, though not so often as I liked.

Douglas was pale and agitated. He motioned me to accompany him to a secluded portion of the grounds. There he stopped, and taking something from the inner pocket of his coat, asked me whether I recognised it.

I did recognise it immediately. It was my lost dagger, the same that he had given to me, and which Katkoff had, on a certain memorable occasion, dashed out of my hand. I had subsequently endeavoured, though vainly, to find the little weapon at the scene of our encounter, and now, upon seeing it, I uttered a cry of joy and stretched out my hand for it. But Douglas looked grave and withheld it from me.

"Wait a moment," he said; "how came you to lose possession of this?"

I blushed, for I suddenly realised that this was an awkward question, seeing that I might not reveal to him the story of Katkoff's attack upon me.

"I—I lost it," I said, "dropped it in the park, and never found it again."

"Do you know one Ootine?" he asked.

"Lieutenant of the Semeonopky guards," I said; "I have seen him, and I think I have spoken to him."

"I took the weapon from his hands," said Douglas gravely, "in time to prevent a terrible crime, as to which, of course, you know nothing."

"Douglas!" I protested, "of course not."

"Yes, of course not; I ought to have been sure of that. Nay, I was sure of it, but

the rascal declared he had it from a lady, who had bade him avenge her upon one who had offended her."

"In any case that would not have been I; you know that, Douglas."

"Yes, I know it, Elsa; I understand now, moreover, that it was a trumped up tale, though at first I was puzzled. God help us, to think that the dagger I gave you should have come so near to the commission of a terrible crime!"

"Douglas!" I gasped, "what has happened, tell me, has some one attempted your life? This young Ootine, and with my own dagger? He is a friend of Katkoff, a vile pair of men. Oh, thank God you are safe, dear Douglas."

"Not I, not I, Elsa, I was never in danger; " said Douglas kindly, pressing my hand in his own. "It was the Prince they would have murdered, though it was I-by God's providence—that detected and prevented the crime. This was but last night, walking here in these very gardens. I caught the fellow prowling about, hoping, doubtless, to come upon the Grand Duke walking in the dusk, as he does, with Countess Vorontsova. Fortunately he mistook me for the Prince, and was all for rushing upon me with some open-mouthed malediction concerning my conduct as a Prince and a husband, when he suddenly found that he had revealed himself to the wrong man. We had a short set to, a very short one. with our swords, for his skill was of the bovine class, and I soon disarmed him. It was then that I extracted at the sword's point that pretty tale in connection with your dagger. Well, I hold Mr. Ootine's confession of guilt, to be used, as I promised him, only in case of need. None know of the affair, however, excepting he and you and I, and I shall not tell the Prince lest he lose his wits for excitement and rage, neither must you tell your mistress. To what end? There is no hurt done, and this Ootine will be harmless for the future."

"And the honour due to you for your share in all this?" I said, gazing with pride in Douglas' face. "Is the Grand Duke never to know what a splendid protector he has in you?"

"No, never," laughed Douglas; "and, indeed, I am grateful to this young man for giving me employment, for I was dull enough. I shall be more reconciled to my life here henceforth, for I shall feel that I must go no longer sleepily, but openeved."

CHAPTER XII.

The immediate result of Douglas' determination to be open-eyed in the future was the capture by him of a big fish.

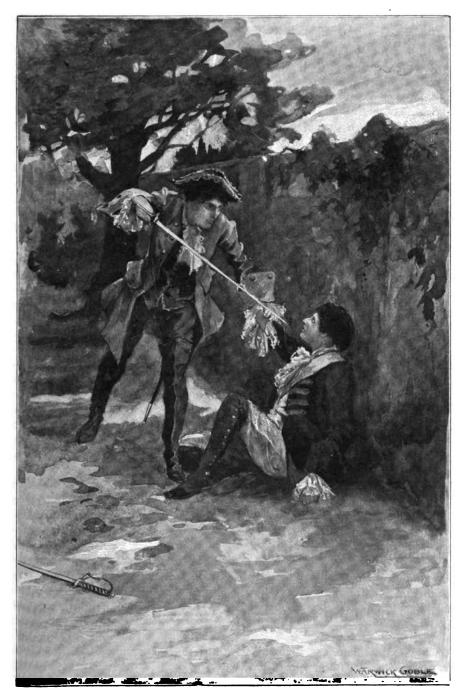
There had been an ill-feeling of late between, respectively, the Empress and the Grand Duke and the Grand Duchess, the cause being Poniatofsky.

Now, the Empress in herself was as easy-going as an erring, kindly old woman can be towards others who err: she would have been glad to pass over the Poniatofsky scandal, of which she was of course well aware. The Grand Duke, no less, was indifferent to the proceedings of his wife so long as he were left free to lead his own life according to his personal ideas of happiness.

But pressure was exercised from without. Whether it was the desire of the foreign Governments to end the scandal of the Russian Imperial Court, or whether their action was based solely upon political motives, which is the more probable, for otherwise our Russian Court might properly have retaliated, "Cleanse ye first your own houses!"—it is certain that great efforts were made by the Powers to have Poniatofsky removed.

As for me, I cordially hoped that these efforts would meet with success, for I was ashamed of the disgrace of this man's position here.

Speaking of the matter with Douglas, who would not, however, for very modesty, converse openly upon such questions, I



"I extracted the tale at the sword's point."

found that his greatest desire was that either the Empress or the Grand Duke, or—if they would—the Powers, should set foot down, and end the *régime* of this Pole—a reign of shame.

The Empress found herself harassed by the Ambassadors and by her own Ministers; but she was both indolent and unwilling to oppose the will of others; she hesitated, and nothing was done.

Then my Douglas, as I believe, spoke nobly to the Tsarevitch, and showed him the open disgrace in which the Court lay, in the eyes of the world, by reason of this man's presence; and the Grand Duke at last aroused himself to a short-lived indignation, and went to the Empress in order to complain of his wife's conduct. The poor Empress, torn asunder, unwilling to render Catherine miserable by expelling Poniatofsky, knew not how to act. She placed the matter in prayer before her favourite *ikon*, but the picture gave her little assistance.

She sent for Catherine, and the Grand Duchess had a memorable audience of her Majesty, Olga Naryshkin, who told me all about it, being present.

The Empress began by vigorously scolding the Tsarevna, declaring that the present scandal of the Court must end, whereto the Grand Duchess replied, kissing the hand of her Majesty most humbly and dutifully, that end it should.

"This Pole, Poniatofsky, must go, and quickly," continued the Empress; "both morally and politically his presence is no longer possible." She took the hand of Catherine very kindly, "I am sorry if this decision pains you, Highness," she added; "I, too, have loved."

"I will tell your Majesty what I have decided to do in order to end the scandal which is spoken of," said the Grand Duchess. "The Polish ambassador may remain; it is I who must depart."

"You!" gasped the Empress; "what do you mean, child?"

"It is I who am the disturbing element,

your Majesty. The Court without me would be blameless; it is therefore I who must be sacrificed. Your irreproachable Court, and that of the Grand Duke, shall not suffer for my misdeeds. I will return to my mother in Zerbst."

"But stop—stay—what mean you, child? That which you suggest is impossible—most undesirable and impossible—in every way. Do you not see it, little fool? The people would not understand your flight; they would say that you had confessed or had been convicted; that the little Prince Paul is a base-born child, and no son of the Tsarevitch; and that there is no heir after Peter."

"It is true," replied Catherine, very gravely; "it is a pity, but they will say all this. It is true!"

"Nay, worse—their thoughts will turn to—to the Thing in the Schlüsselburg Prison—there will be revolution. God knows what might not happen."

"It is true," repeated Catherine; "all this may well come about exactly as your Majesty declares. Even the Ghost of Schlüsselburg has his party, and perhaps a stronger one than we think. I, too, have considered all this; but the Court must be purified, and that is why I have decided to go."

"No, you shall not go, little fool and idiot that you are!" cried the Empress, furious now with rage and fear; "it is impossible. Your husband is a clown and you cannot be expected to be a faithful wife to him—I admit it. There must be a compromise. The Grand Duke has complained and the Ambassadors leave me no peace; but you, too, must be considered. The Pole shall remain, and you shall remain also, but you shall seem to be estranged."

The Grand Duchess laughed.

"For whose benefit?" she asked. "The Grand Duke's or the Ambassadors'?"

"For neither—neither, child. For the sake and the comfort of a harassed old woman, who can see no other way out of a

difficulty. Now, kiss me, little one, and tell me that all is well. Holy Mother! you have scared me terribly. I know not when I have been so frightened. Come, is it to be as I say?"

In the end the Grand Duchess, after a show of resistance and determination, agreed to do as the Empress desired; she would remain, and as for Poniatofsky, he would remain also, but they should seem to be estranged.

Olga laughed very much over her narrative of this interview, and declared that she had never admired the Grand Duchess so much as this day.

"Do you suppose she ever seriously thought of returning to Zerbst?" I asked, in all innocence.

"Never for the tiniest particle of the fraction of an instant!" said Olga, bursting into renewed merriment. "She is the Queen of Diplomats, and has her Majesty in the hollow of her hand. Our side will win—you shall see, my Elsa."

Nevertheless, in this matter of Poniatofsky, "our side," if by that expression is understood the Grand Duchess, did not win; for the Polish ambassador was obliged in the end to take his departure, and with Catherine's consent.

To this end Douglas contributed by accident, as it appeared, though there is one at least who believes that there was but little of the accidental in the matter.

Poniatofsky and the Grand Duchess had become, it was said, estranged; they met but rarely, and when they did come together it was, to all appearance, formally, as guests in the same social circle, or as guest and hostess.

I, in my innocence, fully believed that the Grand Duchess had realised the impropriety of her former conduct, and had resolved to amend the error of her ways—indeed, I was very happy in the belief that this was the case.

"It is a matter to thank the Lord for," I said, speaking of it to Olga.

"Do not be impetuous in gratitude,"

said Olga, laughing; "it is apt to lead to awkwardness afterwards when one finds there is not quite so much to be grateful for as one supposed."

"Oh, Olga!" I murmured, "you will always think the worst."

"I judge of human nature as I know it, and of Catherine as I know her,"said Olga. "If I had a lover whom I loved, and all the Courts of Europe bade me renounce him, do you think I would obey them? Let them mind their own business, say I, and so, I think, would say the Grand Duchess."

"Perhaps the Grand Duchess is both wiser and better than you," I said.

"At any rate she is at least as much a human being as I," Olga laughed. "Wisdom and goodness have to follow suit after human nature, my innocent! They come in at the tail of the procession which human nature leads. Her Highness is very human, though very wise, and—well, moderately good."

"She is splendid. We must not judge these great ones by our little standard, Olga!" I cried. "She is great and good also, you will see. She will overcome evil; she is great enough to resist the wiles of the devil!"

"And you are a pretty innocent!" said Olga, laughing and holding me by the chin. "Lord! I wish I could be as simple as you. Elsa!"

And so the conversation ended, and a very few days after this there occurred something which went to prove Olga right and, alas! my comfortable theory quite wrong.

Douglas was walking, after his wont, within the grounds at Oranienbaum, when he came upon a disguised and muffled figure crouching under the shadow of the wall of that wing of the Palace which is called "the half of the Grand Duchess." Douglas challenged the man, who declared that he was the tailor employed by the Tsarevitch, and that he had come with clothes.

"Where are the clothes?" asked Douglas.

"What is that to thee?" said the fellow.

"Only that I am the officer of the guard upon my rounds, and that I am on the look out for certain malefactors who are suspected of harbouring designs upon that which is not their own. Now those clothes I must see."

The man fumbled under his mantle, and a moment later there appeared from beneath it, not a bundle of clothes, but the blade of a sword, which made a violent dig at the questioner. Douglas had his own sword ready, for he suspected this, being tolerably certain who this tailor was and his business at the Palace; hence, with a tricksome twist he deprived the other of his weapon before even he had time to recover control over it after his first vigorous lunge, which Douglas neatly avoided.

"Ha! Mr. Tailor," he said, "you were not quick enough. Now then, lead the way, and you shall give the Grand Duke his clothes under my supervision. If it prove that there are no clothes to give, then, I fear, you may have to go as far as Siberia to find them, or it may be only as far as the nearest lamp-post, who knows?"

"Stop!" said the other, "I am not a tailor. I did but jest; here are fifty roubles, let me go. It is only a little affair with one of the Court ladies."

"With which one?" asked Douglas.

"Oh, oh! Mr. Officer, fie! Names are not mentioned in such matters."

"I see; well, lead on; the Prince is master here, he shall judge whether you shall be let go or detained for further enquiry."

"Stop! you don't know what you are doing, man!" said the other desperately; "this matter will go further than you think. Name your own price, but go I must"

"Yes, go you must when the devil

drives. Therefore, lead on, time presses; the Grand Duke will be pleased to know of this tremendously important matter—a plot, eh? against his Highness? assuredly you must be better acquainted. Lead on; come, march."

In vain were protests, promises, threats. Douglas drove his prisoner forward at the sword's point, round to the Grand Duke's entrance and in at his Highness' door.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Grand Duke was seated at supper with Lizooshka; he had already consumed more liquor than was good for him. He looked tipsily at the new arrivals.

"What's this? What's this? My faithful Douglas, I see; but who's the other?"
Elizabeth Vorontsova suddenly uttered a coarse laugh.

"Some one who has come into the wrong room," she said; "see, Highness, whom the Count has brought. This is the Grand Duke's apartment, Count, not her Highness'."

"Blitz-und-Donnerwetter!" exclaimed the Prince, tipsily regarding the visitor; "it is Poniatofsky."

"Yes, Highness, it is I," said the culprit. "Since I am caught I may as well admit it. Poniatofsky I am, and to the Grand Duchess' apartments I was bound before this accursed and officious person arrested me. Give me a sword, and I will defend myself against both of you."

"Hoch-hoch, bravo, I like that!" said the Prince; "he is brave and very honest. So you were going to see my wife, Excellence; and why not? I am glad you seem to appreciate her more than I. She is too intellectual for me, my friend, she possesses too much of the tongue. Let him go to her, Douglas, if he must; or, still better, send for her Highness, and she shall sup with us."

"Highness!" said Douglas, "consider."

"Well-what?" hiccoughed Peter. "Do

I not speak plainly? Go for the Grand Duchess."

Douglas' eye sought the place where Lizooshka sat; the Countess observed the look.

"He means that your wife would be embarrassed to see me here, Highness," she laughed. "Perhaps he is right."

"Let her be embarrassed then!" said Peter. "Go, Douglas, do as I bid you. I have set my heart upon having the Grand Duchess to supper. What! may I not sup with my own wife?" But Douglas, good man, absolutely refused to be a party to so shameful a gathering as the Grand Duke would have, and was in the end allowed to depart to his room, thanks to the interference of the Vorontsova, who showed a generous spirit on this occasion.

Thus the big fish that Douglas caught seemed to have escaped out of the net, though, as a matter of fact, the capture and the publicity of the story did presently result in the departure—the final departure—of Poniatofsky.

But alas! there was another most unlooked-for result from the action of Douglas, a result which was to show itself in many tears and much bitterness for me, and perhaps for another.

The Grand Duchess sent for my Douglas, enraged by his interference in capturing Poniatofsky. Her Highness sent me for him, indeed, using an abusive epithet in naming him, which caused me to flush with anger, though I dared, for very discretion, say nothing.

Douglas was with the Prince when I appeared to deliver the message of the Grand Duchess summoning him.

"What?" cried the Tsarevitch,
summoned to confer with the Grand
Duchess? Upon what subject, Elschen,
Love?"

"I know nothing, Highness," I said, though as a matter of fact I conjectured much.

"Shall I be jealous, Douglas?" laughed the Prince, slapping the Count upon the shoulder. "Fie, man, fie! So this was the secret of your zeal in the catcling of the Polish ambassador—you are an aspirant for his position. Ha, ha!" The Tsarevitch appeared to be amused by his own fantastic humour. His mirth shocked me.

"Shame, Highness!" I presumed to say.

Out went the tongue of the Prince into his cheek. He made a grimace or two and drank a glass of Burgundy, his favourite wine.

"She is no respecter of persons this Elsa of ours," he then remarked to Douglas.

"The Countess is right," said Douglas bravely. "The pleasantry of your Highness was not well thought of."

"Oh, oh!" said the Prince, looking somewhat disconcerted. "If I may not speak thus of my own wife, who may?"

"Assuredly none," said Douglas, "and if your Highness will but do as I ask of you there shall no longer be justification for any such ill-tasting pleasantries as this of yours."

"And what may that be?" asked Peter, grimacing.

"Let me now carry a message to her Highness that you have well considered this matter of the Polish ambassador, and that you are determined that he must be allowed to return to Warsaw."

"Tfu!" said Peter. "What do I care? If Poniatofsky departs another will come. Do you think I do not know my own wife? She——"

"Hush, Highness, for decency's sake!" said Douglas. The Prince glanced at me and said no more.

"Sufficient are the evils of one day," continued Douglas. "Why must we anticipate new dishonour? End this one scandal at least, Prince, for honour's sake. The future will take care of itself."

The Tsarevitch walked about the room for some little while deep in thought.

"Well, you can try it," he said at last; "but I have little authority. Tell her Poniatofsky is to go; but I think he will stay all the same. And if he does go she will lead me a pretty life."

"Nevertheless, let the Count carry your message, Highness," I said, in my anxiety that it should be as Douglas suggested, and the scandal ended, even at the expense of my mistress' present happiness.

"Well, he may—he may. I have said so," said Peter, gradually working himself up to some enthusiasm in favour of the suggestion of Douglas. "And tell her, Douglas, that I am weary of these scandals, and will have no more of them. Grosser Himmel! it is I that am Tsarevitch. Who was she before I raised her from the dirt? Hark you, I will be obeyed—tell her so!"

"That is good, Highness," said Douglas approvingly, pleased indeed to see the Prince show a little spirit. "I will tell the Grand Duchess how firm you are in this matter, and that you are determined to be obeyed."

"Yes, tell her all this," said the Prince.
"What! am I to be dishonoured at discretion — I, the grandson of Peter Maximus?"

Douglas moved towards the door, making no further reply for fear of weakening the resolve of the Grand Duke, who, he was well aware, was likely to run down in his spirit as quickly as he had run up. We contrived to place the door between ourselves and his Highness, however, before his resolution had begun to waver. Yet, when we were in the corridor, he put his head out and called Douglas back.

"Be careful that you speak not too roughly, Douglas," I heard him say, "we are all sinners alike. I desire this Pole away, but remember that it will be a wrench to her."

"And I will remember that you have a kind heart," said Douglas, "but also that you are the Tsarevitch," and waiting for no further instructions, we hastened down the corridor and away to the apartments of the Grand Duchess.

And with her Highness poor Douglas passed, as I well believe, a trying time, though I have never been able to obtain the full details of the interview from him; but that the Grand Duchess was furious to begin with, and somewhat tearful to end with, I know, and the interview in effect was something as I now give it.

Her Highness was alone when I ushered my Douglas into the room. She stood in the midst of the apartment, and stamped her foot when we entered, looking the picture of majestic fury.

"Go, Elsa," she said; "I will see this officious gentleman alone." She watched me depart, and shut the door after me, so that I saw no more and heard only when her Highness raised her voice, which was, however, rather frequently.

Her Highness, as Douglas has often told me, first slowly looked him up and down from head to foot, wearing a remarkably proud and handsome curl of the lip and an air of majesty which was very admirable.

Then she commenced to harangue and to lecture him for many minutes upon the disloyalty and cowardice and ungallantry of his conduct in thus working for the ruin of the happiness of a friendless woman, hated by her husband, far from friends and relations, and without a hope of comfort in this world excepting in the society of him whom Douglas strove to banish from her.

To all of which Douglas answered only one thing, that his master was the Tsarevitch, and him he must serve; if the interests of the Prince should clash with those of others he would greatly regret it, but the interests of the Prince must by him be advanced with all his might.

Even when Douglas gave the message of the Grand Duke, that he was weary of the scandals which were consuming his honour, together with that of the Grand

Duchess, and her Highness suddenly abandoned her attitude of angry majesty, and relapsed into tearful entreaty that Douglas would ask the Tsarevitch to reconsider his determination to interfere in the matter of the Polish ambassador, the Count would promise nothing of the kind, but simply repeated that since there was a right way and a wrong way, he must follow the right. Then, seeing that this was his unalterable determination, namely, to fight for the interests of his master as he understood them, Catherine quickly abandoned again her entreaties and reassumed the majesty and scorn of the beginning of the interview (which attitude suited her much better), and abused and harangued and lectured Douglas till the end of the chapter.

When at length he came forth from her presence, having yielded not one inch of

ground, whether to majestic indignation or to melting womanly persuasion, Douglas bade me a short good-night and departed, flushed and wearied, but calm and dignified as ever.

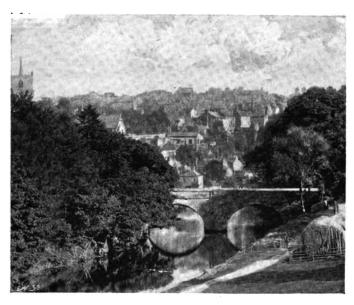
As for the Grand Duchess, she too came forth presently, pale and greatly agitated, furious with indignation, and distraught with sorrow—for she realised that the battle was lost, and that Poniatofsky must really go. She bade me have no more to do with my guardian, for I could not both serve her and associate with him also.

"He is not to be trusted, Elsa," she said, "to have dealings with those who are on my side, for he is a partisan of the Grand Duke from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot; and it is a pity, for we could do with him on our side. He is a fine man, though obstinate."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



GENERAL VIEW OF KNARESBOROUGH PROM THE CHURCH TOWER,



The High Bridge, Knaresborough, From Bilton Fields.

THE HEART OF YORKSHIRE.

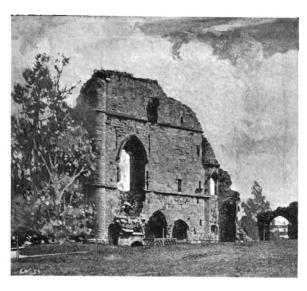
BY J. S. FLETCHER.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY G. E. ARNOLD, KNARESBOROUGH.

NARESBOROUGH is one of those rare towns wherein it feels good to spend a summer night out-o'-doors. There is nothing of the light and heat in its quaint nooks and corners which one gets in the crowded streets and squares of a London or a Leeds; no Bacchanalian throng-no, not even o' market nights, when the rural mind naturally tends to merriment!—jostles you in inconsiderate fashion; rather, the place is a haunt of peace, ancient enough, and full of suggestion. There are a hundred retreats within its boundaries where a man might linger and dream on such a night; a young man, with thoughts of love in his head, here; a grey-beard, in love with

peace and meditation, there-but greybeard and youth alike, on the ancient bridge which spans the river just where the trees make canopies of shade. There a man might well dream the night awaysuch a short night, at least, as an English summer gives—to the murmur of the water beneath him, the whispering of the wind in the trees high above his head, and the suggestions of antiquity which steal over an imaginative mind in the midst of such a scene. It is only an ancient town that can produce these feelings-your modern and mushroom thing of a day's labour, with its rows of model cottages and red brick villas, repels and limits—it needs the whispers and the scented air of the

past to make one feel that it is indeed good to be in certain places. There are towns that instinctively repel; there are others which just as instantly attract; and



The Castle from the south.

if the reasons are sought for, it will almost always be found that newness is unwelcome and antiquity loveable. Man, after all, is essentially conservative in his inmost nature; he loves the old things and the old ways with whatever of artistic perception he may conceal beneath an unpromising and business-like exterior. And so when he finds himself suddenly brought face to face with antiquity, he becomes conscious of a certain influence which leads to a restful attitude of mind. That influence is the lullaby which the spirit of antiquity delights in singing to the latest children of the ages—a lullaby which serves as a perpetual reminder that the past is a sure refuge from the unrest and feverish life of the present.

Antiquity is loud in voice and conspicuous of feature in such towns as Knaresborough, where the new things have grown so gradually out of the old ones as to be unobtrusive or even unnoticeable. There is, of course, railway communication with this town, just as there is in the case of many other historical towns of picturesque situation. As at Conway, there is some attempt to make the

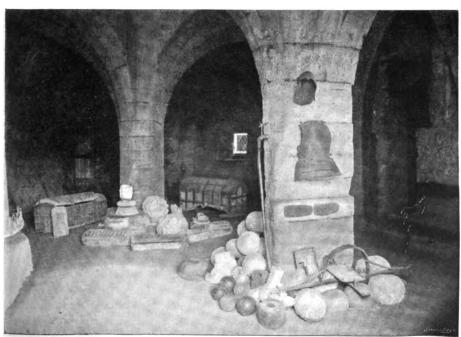
necessary railway bridge in keeping with the scene it violates, but Knaresborough would be more picturesque without the bridge which the carries North-Eastern Railway over the Nidd, for it must needs come into comparison with that other bridge lower down the river, whereon it is always a delight to linger. But it is not necessary, so long as vou are not a mere railway traveller, to approach Knaresborough by rail-the cyclist and the pedestrian may draw near to it otherwise, and they will be well advised if they make their entry from the eastward, coming over that mighty

plain which gradually shelves into the Vale There lies Marston Moor, the scene of one of the stoutest contests 'twixt Roundhead and Cavalier; from thence may be seen the high towers of York Minster, the long blue line of the Yorkshire Wolds, separating the North Sea and the coast-line from the long levels of mid-Yorkshire; and, far to the northward, the sudden lift of the Hambledon Hills. whence come the Ure and the Swale to swell the widening volume of the Ouse. It is an interesting and instructive country that lies to the eastward of Knaresborough, packed with villages and hamlets bearing old-world names, and rich with old-world memories and associations. Also it is, as it were, the very heart of the broad-acred county through which you thus pass in approaching Knaresborough from York or Wetherby -half-way, as regards north and south, between Cronkley Fell and Shire Oak half-way, west by east, 'twixt Bowland

Forest and Skipsea on the Holderness Coast.

Whatever scenery one admires in approaching Knaresborough from the eastward, however, is forgotten, save as a pleasant memory, when one comes to the High Bridge, and leans over its parapet to absorb the view of the town which literally piles itself up before one's eyes. The houses rise in irregular, serrated terraces, a mass of cool and refreshing colour in which grey points of rock, covered in summer with flowers, and at all seasons with glossy ivy, lift themselves out of a bower of green. Ancient buildings, quaint affairs of grey, capped with subdued red roofs, occur in this picture at occasional places and each is worthy a second glance, but the eye naturally turns to the Parish Church, throned high on the brow of the cliff. Nothing could be more delightful than to linger on the High Bridge—which is, by-the-bye, only "high" in name—on a calm evening, listening to the music of the Parish Church bells as it mingles with the ripple of the river. It only needs twilight, or, perhaps, moonlight to make the mise en scène perfect.

It is somewhat difficult in visiting a town like Knaresborough, where history and antiquity compete with natural beauty for the tourist's attention and admiration, to decide as to which show-place should be seen first. Knaresborough boasts of many show-places, and notably of its Castle, its Church, the Dropping Well, most curious thing of its kind in England, St. Robert's Chapel, where one Robert Flower attained grace and sanctity, and St. Robert's Cave, where Eugène Aram buried the body of his victim, Daniel Perhaps it is most natural to turn first to the Castle, as being the keystone of the bridge which an ancient town builds over the gulf of time. The Castle is now a place of recreation; there are gas-lamps, newly-planted trees, and public seats in the courtyards, incongruous enough when viewed in company with crumbling



The Guard-room.

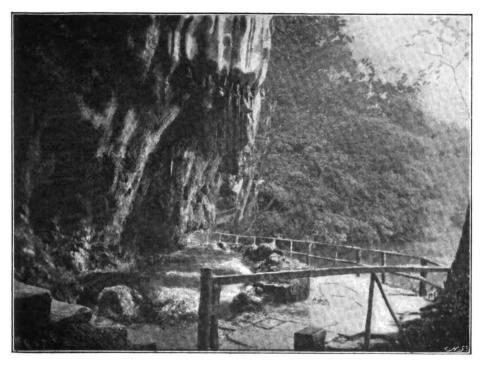
walls and once mighty battlements. The curiosities of the place, a chest once in the possession of William the Conqueror, the walking stick of "Blind Jack of Knaresborough," the ancient armour of the Slingsby family, and cannon-balls dug from the ruins and the adjacent grounds, may be seen by paying the usual small fee to the usual keeper. But one is not quite so much concerned about these things as in trying to think how this old borough gradually grew up around this still older Castle. At the time of Edward the Confessor, Knaresborough was already a Saxon manor and a royal possession. Very probably a Saxon stronghold stood where the ruins of the Norman Castle are now, after nine centuries, slowly crumbling to dust. One can imagine that Norman keep rising white, cruel, impregnable, the very emblem of the new rule. Serlo de Burgh it was who Serlo was one of William's built it. first barons, and doubtless zealous in impressing the lessons of the Conquest upon the hapless English. It subsequently passed into the hands of the D'Estoteville family; hence back to the Crown, then to Brienne de l'Isle "during the King's pleasure," and then to Hubert de Burgh, favourite of Henry III. a while it was in possession of Gaveston, the insolent hanger-on of Edward II., and under him Knaresborough town received some privileges. It was made a Free Burgh, and its men Free Burgesses, with one market and one fair, one gibbet and one gallows, two coroners, and freedom of all fines and amercements for toll, postage, murage, and pannage throughout the whole kingdom. When Gaveston fell the Castle again reverted to Chaucer's son, Sir Thomas, the Crown. was for a while its Constable, under John of Gaunt, and Richard III. was imprisoned in its dungeons before being carried to the "fatal and bloody" prison of Pontefract. James I. gave it to Charles his son in 1616, and during the rest of that ill-fated

monarch's life it remained loyal to him or, rather, the men who had it in charge As for the Castle itself it was seized by the Parliamentarians in 1644, and in 1648 was dismantled by the House of Commons. Out of the ruins grew many of the houses and cottages round about. It is now a mere shadow of its former self, but Leland has left a faithful record of its appearance in his "Itinerary": "The Castle," he says, "standith magnificently and strongly on a Rok, and hath a very deep diche hewing out of the Rok, where it is not defended with the ryver Nydde, ther renneth in a deade stony bottom. I nombired a eleven or twelve towers in the woul of the Castle, and one very fayre beside, in the second area there long two other lodgings of stone."

Leland, whose eyes would seem to have allowed nothing noteworthy to escape them, has also a reference to the Dropping "This water," he Well and its water, remarks, "is so could, and of such a nature that what thing soever faullith oute of the Rokkes ynto this pitte, or ys caste in, or growith about the Rokke and vs touched of this water, growith ynto stone; or else sum sand, or other fine ground that is about the Rokkes, cummith doune with the continuall droppinge of the springes in the Rokkes, and clevith on such things as it takith, and so clevith aboute it and giveth it by continuance the shape of a stone." He might have said, "and actually turnith it into stone," for, so far as the ordinary observer is concerned, it seems impossible to say that the various objects which have been exposed to the petrifying waters of the Dropping Well are not stone. The appearance of the front of the well, or rather of the rock over which the water runs into a semicircular basin beneath, is distinctly reminiscent of the shrines, holy wells, and other religious haunts where devotees hang various objects in supplication or Suspended by pieces of thanksgiving. string or wire are such matters as birds'-

nests, old hats, a pair of gloves, twigs from the neighbouring trees, boots—in short, almost anything that will present a novel aspect when petrified. These petrifactions are, of course, disposed of at handsome prices to the tourist, as are also trinkets and small articles worked out of the deposit. It takes about three months to petrify a small object, and the

told the fall of Cardinal Wolsey, and thereby established her fame as a Sibyl, is said to have resided near the Dropping Well, and the inn near the low bridge is named after her. History says that she was born at Knaresborough in 1488, and that her real name was Ursula Southill. She married Tobias Shipton, of Shipton, near York, and from time to time put



The Dropping Well, Knaresborough.

non-scientific observer cannot help reflecting on the strange way in which Nature's method of working is exemplified in this Well, for you see the water trickle, trickle, trickle—and that is all. But the scientist will doubtless say that the fact that the water contains so much carb onate of soda, so much sulphates of lime and magnesia, and so much carbonate of lime accounts for everything. However that may be, the Dropping Well of Knaresborough is in its way an unapproachable curiosity.

That famous Mother Shipton who tore-

orth various prophecies. What her more intimate contemporaries thought of her powers may be judged from the epitaph on her tombstone in Shipton churchyard, where she was interred in 1561.

"Here lies she who never lied:
Whose skill often has been tried;
Her prophecies shall still survive,
And ever keep her name alive."

Mother Shipton, however, has little claim to notice in writing of the town where she was born. She may have been a rank impostor who happened by great good luck to hit on a few fortunate coincidences, or a clever, prescient woman, like many another old-fashioned Yorkshire country wife, whose natural wit helped her to see which way the wind was like to blow. A much more interesting personage was Robert Flower, or

Arm eg c

Sir Robert's Chapel (exterior).

Saint Robert, whose cave is situated at the foot of a rocky precipice overhanging the Nidd. There is, perhaps, nothing in Knaresborough more interesting than this cave, for it was by repute the dwelling of a holy man, and by well authenticated fact the scene of a dark tragedy. Here it was that St. Robert lived a life of marvellous asceticism, and that Eugène Aram, made a familiar name to most folk

by Tom Hood and Lord Lytton in ballad and romance, hid the body of his murdered friend. As for the Saint, he was the son of Tooke Flower, Mayor of York in the reign of Richard I., and from his childhood the love of sanctity was strong within him. He was a monk of Whitby, and

> then of Fountains, and he must have proved himself a man of some worth, for he was made first Abbot of Newminster Abbev in Northumberland. One would have thought that here was opportunity enough for anybody, but Robert spurned alike the distinction of his office-equal in those days to a deanery in these-and the allurements of his father's house, and betook himself to a dark and damp cell on the banks of the Nidd. There, as tradition hath it, he lived on herbs and roots, drank water, slept little, and that on hard stone; and performed various miracles, one of which was to mend a badly broken leg with a touch. He died in 1216, and the monks from Fountains fought with the burgesses for his The burgesses buried him in his Chapel

of the Holy Cross, a curious cave-dwelling hewn out of the solid rock, ten feet long, nine feet wide, and seven feet high. Without its door is the carved figure of a fully armed man; within is an excavation said to be the saint's grave; over the chapel itself is a little cell. In chapel and cell one gets a full scent of that indescribable perfume of the past which is so intoxicating to the imaginative mind. A clos

ing of the eyes—you are back in the twelfth century!

But St. Robert's Cave is suggestive of something other than miracle and asceticism. It was here, in 1745, that Eugène Aram committed the crime which gained him a notoriety such as few other criminals have ever known. Eugène himself, of course, never knew anything of his fame. There were no halfpenny evening newspapers in his day, and it is highly probable that only those directly concerned took any interest in his crime. Did he ever foresee, one wonders (for murderers are proverbially vain), that a clever poet and a brilliant novelist would make capital out of his misdeeds? If he were like some of his class, one can imagine with what delight he would have received the news that Sir Henry Irving had recited "The Dream of Eugène Aram" in his best manner, or that Lord Lytton, the brilliant, accomplished author of Pelham, had deigned to compose a romance of which he, the poor usher, was the melancholy and interesting hero. Or, again, that quite a number of persons—and notably those young ladies who admired the aforesaid brilliant, accomplished author so much in the early 'thirties-believed Eugène to have been, not merely an interesting, but a sorely wronged man. However all this may be. the bare facts of the matter as they relate to Knaresborough are sordid enough, and afford one more illustration of the truth of the old adage that murder will out. In the winter of 1745 three young men of Knaresborough, named Aram, Houseman, and Clarke, were walking in the neighbourhood of St. Robert's Cave. Clarke, in the act of climbing a gate, was struck down from behind by Aram and immediately murdered, after which his body was buried in the cave which the Saint's presence had aforetime hallowed. body seems to have suspected Aram or Houseman, and time went on, Clarke's disappearance remaining a mystery.

Aram went off to King's Lynn, in Norfolk, and became an usher in a school there; Houseman remained at Knaresborough, and continued his usual avocations. But when nearly fourteen years had gone by it chanced that some labourers in excavating a quarry in the neighbourhood discovered a human skele-On this a coroner's inquest was held, and Houseman attended it. took up one of the bones, and remarked, "This is no more one of Dan Clarke's bones than it is mine," whereupon he was arrested on suspicion of knowing something about Clarke's disappearance. And so the whole truth came out, and Eugène Aram, far away at King's Lynn, found that the arm of justice is a long one.

"That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn
Through the cold and heavy mist,
And Eugène Aram walked between
With gyves upon his wrist,"

He was tried at York Assizes, sentenced to death, and executed there, and the authorities, who in those days had some sense of poetic justice, hung his body in chains on a hill which flanks the high-road running from Plompton to Knaresborough.

It seems most natural in turning away from a town full of historic association to say farewell to it in the churchyard, where lie the bones of the men who made Older even in history than the story of St. Robert and his cave and chapel is the story of the Parish Church at Knaresborough. In 1114 it was an appurtenance of the ancient Priory of Nostell, near Pontefract, a good twentyfive miles away as the crow flies; in 1230 Walter Grey, Archbishop of York, united it with the Prebend of Bickhill. During the Scottish invasion of 1318 the church, then thatched with straw, was set on fire, but by 1343 it had been restored, and in that year it was reconsecrated.



The Manor House and Church from the Long Walk.

then many alterations and improvements have been made in its structure, and nearly five thousand pounds was spent upon it about thirty years ago. There is some fine stained glass in nave, transepts, and chancel, and some interesting mural tablets record the names and deeds of various local celebrities. The Slingsby chapel, on the north side of the chancel. contains numerous monuments of the Slingsbys of Scriven, a notable family of the neighbourhood, whose members figured conspicuously in the history of their country at one time or another as warriors, courtiers, priests, and sportsmen. One inscription is significant enough to be recorded here. It is that of Sir Henry Slingsby, knighted by Elizabeth in 1602, Vice-President of the Council of the North and High Sheriff of Yorkshire. His monument represents him in his

winding sheet, with a cloth bound about his head, while a black stone informs the reader that "Here lies Sir Henry Slingsby, Knight, son and heir of Francis and Mary Slingsby, who died December 17, 1634, aged 74.—SED OMNIA VANITAS." What a reflection after so long a life! Compare it with that of the worthy Yorkshire wife whose tomb is without in the churchyard:—

"Sacred to the Memory of the Agreeable and Good MRS. DOVE,

Whose life was One Continued Practice of every Christian Virtue,

insomuch that any Attempt of describing her Perfections,

would really be an Inguery to her Character.
Died 1759—Aged 99."

There is something satisfactory, pleasing, and naïve in this epitaph, and one feels that it would have been good to know the ancient dame whose virtues it

so quaintly celebrates. But here is another on the grave of a wife, whose commemorators seem to have thought her somewhat hardly dealt with, if not exactly put upon:—

"Farewell, my husband and children dear,
I've done for you for many a year,
I have always provided for the best,
But now I am gone to take my rest."

One cannot help wondering whether that was the result of a strong sense of humour, or whether it was meant as a sly hint to the surviving husband and offspring that the deceased had had a hard time of it. It makes little difference which surmise or conjecture is correct—to die and lie asleep in such a quiet spot as this, amidst the hushed murmur of the still and peaceful life of an old English market town, is a fate that jaded city folk might well envy. For here no rude noise comes, and the murmur of the Nidd is not unheard, and when it mingles with the bells chiming at eventide there is that in the air which makes the loiterer pray that these grey haunts of ancient peace may long be kept secure against the devastating march of so-called progress.



The Old Manor House and Church, Knaresborough.



Huntsman (to Local Horsedealer).—"Weel, Jock, are ye for after the hounds the day?"

Jock.—"After the hounds? Na, na; gin the hounds dinna come after me, I'll no meddle wi' them."

A POINT OF THEOLOGY ON MADURO.

BY LOUIS BECKE.

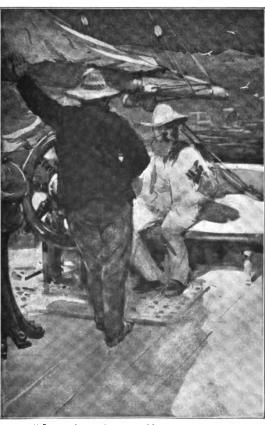
ILLUSTRATED BY D. B. WATERS.

THE Palestine, South Sea trading lug, of Sydney, had just dropped anchor off a native village on Mādurŏ in the North Pacific, when Macpherson the trader came alongside in his boat and jumped on board. He was a young but serious-faced man with a red beard, was thirty years of age, and had achieved no little distinction for having once attempted to convert Captain "Bully" Hayes, when that irreligious mariner was suffering from

fractured skull, superinduced by a bullet, fired at him by a trader whose connubial happiness he had unwarrantably upset. The natives thought no end of Macpherson. because in his spare time he taught a class in the Mission Church. and neither drank nor smoked. This was quite enough to make him famous from one end of Polynesia the other; but he bore his

honours quietly, the only signs of superiority he showed over the rest of his fellow-traders being the display on the rough table in his sitting-room of a quantity of theological literature by the Reverend James MacBain, of Aberdeen. Still he was not proud, and would lend any of his books or pamphlets to any white man who visited the island. He was a fairly prosperous man, worked hard at his trading business, and, despite his assertions on the

fearful future awaited that everyone who had not read the Reverend Mr. Mac-Bain's religious works, was well-liked. But few white men spent an evening in his house if they could help it. One reason of this was that whenever a ship touched at Mādurŏ, the Hawaiian native teacher. Lilo, always haunted Macpherson's house, and every trader and trading skipper detested this



" Just pairsecuting an auld man o' seventy."

teacher above all others. Macpherson liked him and said he was "earnest," the other white min called him, and believed him to be, a smug-faced and sponging hypocrite.

Well, as I said, Macpherson came on board, and Packenham and Denison, the supercargo, at once noticed that he looked more than usually solemn. Instead of, as on former occasions, coming into the brig's trade-room and picking out his trade goods, he sat down facing the captain and answered his questions as to the state of business, &c., on the island in an awkward, restrained manner.

"What's the matter, Macpherson?" said the captain. "Have you married a native girl and found out that she is related to anyone on the island, and you haven't house-room enough for 'em all, or what?"

The trader stroked his bushy, sandy beard with a rough brown hand, and his clear grey eyes looked steadily into those of the captain.

"I'm no the man to marry any native girl, Captain Packenham. When I do marry anyone it will be the girl who promised hersel' tae me five years ago in Aberdeen. But there, I'm no quick to tak' offence at a bit o' fun. An' I want ye two tae help me to do a guid deed. I want ye tae come ashore wi' me at once an' try and put some sense into the head o' this obstinate native teacher."

"Why, what has he been doing?"

"Just pairsecuting an auld man o' seventy an' a wee bit of a child. An' if we canna mak' him tak' a sensible view o' things, ye'll do a guid action by taking the puir things awa' wi' ye to some ither pairt o' the South Seas, where the creatures can at least live."

Then he told his story. Six months before, a German trading vessel had called at Mādurŏ, and landed an old man of seventy and his granddaughter—a little girl of ten years of age. To the astonishment of the people the old man proved to be a native of the island. His name was

Rimé. He had left Mādurŏ forty years before for Tahiti as a seaman. At Tahiti he married, and then for many years worked with other Marshall Islanders on Antimanao Plantation, where two children were born to him. The elder of these, when she was fifteen years of age, married a Frenchman trading in the Paumotu Islands.

The other child, a boy, was drowned at For eight or nine years Rimé and his Tahitian wife, Tiaro, lived alone on the great plantation; then Tiaro sickened and died, and Rimé was left by himself. Then one day came news to him from the distant Paumotus-his daughter and her white husband had fallen victims to the small-pox, leaving behind them a little girl. A month later Rimé worked his way in a pearling schooner to the island where his granddaughter lived, and claimed her. His heart was empty he said. They would go to Māduro, though so many long, long years had passed since he, then a strong man of thirty, had seen its low line of palmclad beach sink beneath the sea rim; for he longed to hear the sound of his mothertongue once more. And so the one French priest on Marutea blessed him and the child-for Rimé had become a Catholic during his stay in the big plantation—and said that God would be good to them both in their long journey across the wide Pacific to far-off Mādurŏ.

But changes had come to Mādurŏ in forty years. When Rimé had sailed away to seek his fortune in Tahiti he and his people were heathens; when he returned he found them rigid Protestants of the Boston New England Cotton-Mather type, to whom the name of "Papist" was an abomination and a horror. And when Rimé said that he too was a Christian—a Katoliko—they promptly told him to clear out. He was not an American Christian anyway, they said, and had no business to come back to Mādurŏ.

"An'," said Macpherson, "I'll no

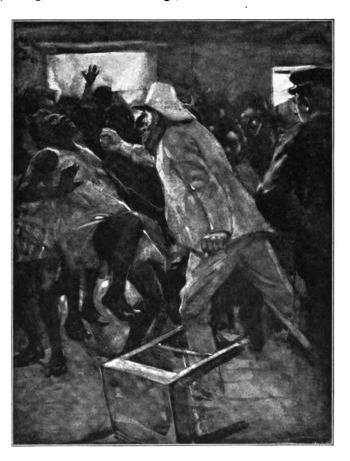
suffer this—the poor creature an' the wee bit child canna git a bit to eat but what I gie them. An' because I do gie them something to eat Lilo has turned against me, an' says I'm no a Christian. So I want ye to come ashore an' reason wi' the man. He's but a bigot, I fear; though his wife

is no so hard on the poor man an' the child as he is; but a woman has а tender aye heart for a child. An' yet, ye see, this foolish Rimé will no give in, an' says he will die before he changes his faith at Lilo's bidding. They took awa' his silly brass cruceefix. slung it in the lagoon. Then the auld ass made anither out of a broken canoe paddle, an' stickit the thing up in my cook-shed! An' I have no the heart to tell him to put it in the fire an' warm his naked shin bones wi' it. But I think if we all tackle the native teacher together we may knock some sense into his conceited head, an' make him treat the poor man better. verra hard, too, on the poor auld fellow that these people will

not gie him back even a bit o' his own land."

Then he went on to say that ever since Riméhadlanded he and the child had been sleeping every night in his (Macpherson's) cooking-shed. The trader had given him a bundle of mats and free access to a pile of Fiji yams and a bag of rice, and sometimes Louisa, Lilo's Hawaiian wife, would visit them at night, ostensibly to

convert Rimé from the errors of Rome, but really to leave him a cooked fish or a piece of pork. Most of the day, however, Rimé was absent, wandering about the beaches with his granddaughter. They were afraid to even pass near the houses of the village, for the children threw stones



In an instant Macpherson struck him between the eyes.

at them, and the men and women cursed them. Matters had gone on like this till two weeks before the *Palestine* arrived, when Lilo and some of his deacons had formed themselves into a deputation, and visited the trader. It was very wrong of him, they said, to encourage this wicked old man and his child. And they wanted him to cease giving them food or shelter—then when the "Katolikos" found

themselves starving they would be glad to give up the "evil" religion which they had learnt in Tahiti. Then would they be baptised and food given them by the people of Mādurŏ.

Macpherson tried to reason with Lilo. But neither he nor the white-shirted, but trouserless, deacons would listen to him. And furthermore, they gave him a warning—if Rimé continued obstinate, they would hold him (Macpherson) responsible and tapu his store. Rimé did continue obstinate, and next morning the trader found himself tabooed, which is a mere euphemism for boycotted.

"That's pretty rough on you, Mac," said Packenham.

"'Twill just ruin me, I fear. Ye see there's four ither traders on this island besides me, an' all my business has gone to them. But what can I do? The silly auld fule of a Rimé won't give in, an' I canna see him starve."

At noon, as Packenham, with his supercargo and Macpherson, stepped out of the trader's dwelling, and walked together to the Mission House, a native went through the village blowing a conch. Lilo had agreed to meet the white men and discuss matters with them. Already the big room in the teacher's house was filled with people, who sat around the walls three or four deep, talking in whispered tones, and wondering why the white men troubled so much over a miserable old man and a wretched child, who were both accursed "Katolikos."

As the captain and his friends entered, Lilo the teacher advanced to meet them. He was a small slenderly-built man, with a skin scarcely darker than that of an Italian, and very handsome features. After a few words of effusive welcome, and a particularly sweet smile to Macpherson, he escorted the white men to their seats—three chairs placed together at the head of the room.

Presently there was a shuffling of naked

feet outside, and five or six young men entered the house, pushing before them an old man and a girl—Rimé and his grandchild. In the centre of the room was a small square mat of cocoanut leaf—the Marshall Island prisoners dock. With limbs trembling with age, Rimé seated himself cross-legged; the child, kneeling at his back, placed her bony arms around his wrinkled body, and clasped him tightly; her eyes, big, black, and mournful, filled with the indifference born of despair. Then, as she saw Macpherson, a faint semblance of a smile flitted across her sallow face.

Lilo struck his hand upon a little table before which he sat, and at once the assembly was silent. Then he turned to Packenham and said in perfect English, pointing to the two figures in the centre of the room:

"That is Rimé and his child. They have given us much trouble, and I and the deacons of this island do not want trouble. We are Christians, and will not have any 'Katolikos' here. Mr. Macpherson says we are cruel. He is wrong. We are just, and this man and this child must give up their false faith. cause you have written me a letter about this matter I have called the people together so that we may talk. So, if you please, captain, will you speak, and I will interpret whatever you say to the people."

"Will he, the damned little sweep?" muttered the supercargo to Packenham. "Tell him that we can talk in Mādurŏ as well as he can—and better."

So, much to the teacher's disgust, Packenham answered in the Mādurŏ dialect. "'Twas better," he said, "that they should all talk Mādurŏ." Lilo smiled unpleasantly, and said "Very well."

Then Packenham, turning to the people, spoke to the point.

"Look into my face, people of Mādurŏ, and listen to my words. Long before the missionaries came to this island I lived

among ye for three years with my wife Nerida. And is there here one man or one woman who can say that I ever lied to him or her? So this do I say to ye all, and to thee, Lilo, the teacher of the Word of God, that ye do wrong to persecute this old man and this child. For is it not true that he hath land, which ye have denied to him? Is it not true that he is old and feeble, and his limbs tremble as he walks? Yet ye neither give him food nor drink, nor yet a mat whereon to lay his head. He is a 'Katoliko,' ye say. Are there not many thousands of 'Katolikos' in Hawaii, the land from whence comes Lilo? And I ask of thee, Lilo, do they suffer wrong from the king and the chiefs of Hawaii because of their faith? So to thee, Lilo, do I say, beware! Thou art but a young and ignorant man, and were I to tell the white missionaries in Honolulu (who are thy masters) that this old man and this little child would have died of hunger but that the heart of one man alone was tender to them, then wouldst thou hang thy head in shame when the mission ship comes here next year. For hath not Christ said, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy'? And so I say to ye all, let this old man dwell among ye in peace, for death is near to him, and shame will be thine if ye deny to him his right to die on his own land, of which ye have robbed him."

The teacher sprang to his feet, his dark eyes blazing with passion.

"There shall be no mercy shown to Katolikos; for they are of the devil and his works!" and from the people there came a deep growl of approval, which changed into a savage hissing as Macpherson rose and stretched out his hand.

"Let me speak," he said.

"No," shouted the teacher. "Who are you? You are a bad man, you are——"

Packenham made two strides over to Lilo and placed his heavy hand on his shoulder,—"Sit down, ye damned little psalm-singing kanaka hog, or I'll knock your eye out. He shall speak."

"Get thee hence, thou shielder of the devil's children," said a young deacon, walking up to the trader and spitting contemptuously at his feet. "We want no such white men as thee among us here in Mādurŏ," In an instant Macpherson struck him between the eyes and sent him flying backwards among his fellow-deacons. Then came an angry roar from the people.

The trader turned to Packenham with a groan, "I'm a ruined man now, Captain Packenham, and all through this auld fule of a Papist." Then he again tried to speak amidst the uproar.

"Sit down, damn you," said Denison, the supercargo, "and don't excite them any more. They're ready for any mischief now. Oh, you she-devil," and he darted into the middle of the room towards Rimé and his granddaughter. stout muscular girl had torn the child's arms from the old man's waist, and was beating her savagely in the face with clenched fists. Denison gave her an under-clip on the jaw and sent her down, and in a few seconds the old man and child were the centre of a struggling group -the white men hitting out right and left to save them from being murdered. The teacher's wife, a tall, graceful young woman-with whom Denison had been exchanging surreptitious glances a few minutes before,-weeping copiously the while, aided them by belabouring the backs of the women who were endeavouring to get at the prostrate figure of the little girl. But Packenham, Macpherson and the supercargo were too much for the natives, and soon cleared a space around them.

"Take them to the ship, Captain Packenham," said the teacher's wife pantingly, in English. "These people are mad now. Go—go at once!"

Picking up the frail figure of the old man, the captain, followed by Macpherson



Picked up a boat five hundred miles west of Maduro.

and the supercargo, soon gained the boat through a shower of stones and other missiles. Ten minutes later they were on board the *Palestine*.

"What a devil of a row," said Packenham, as he clinked his glass against that of Macpherson, who, after the exciting events of the past hour, had been induced to take a nip to steady his nerves; "ye aught to be d——d well ashamed of yourself, Mac, to be mixed up in a fight over a Papist. What would Mr. MacBainsay, eh?"

"It's a verra bad business for me," said Macpherson ruefully. "Ye'll have to come back for me next month an' tak' me awa' from Mādurŏ. I'll do no more business here, I can see."

"Right ye are, Mac," and Packenham grasped his hand. "I will come back for ye if it takes me a month of Sundays to beat against the trades. And ye're a white man, Mac; and I'll never laugh at MacBain any more."

That night, as the captain of the *Palestine* slept upon the skylight, old Rimé, who, with the child, lay upon the deck just beneath Packenham, rose softly to his knees and peered into the white man's face. He was sleeping soundly. Rimé touched his grandchild with his foot. She awoke, and together they pressed their lips to the skipper's hand. Then without a sound they stole along the deck, clambered over the brig's low side, dropped into the water and swam ashore.

When daylight came the *Palestine* was rolling heavily to a sweeping westerly swell, with the wind piping hard through her cordage as she strained at her cable. The absence of old Rimé and the child was not discovered till coffee-time; the mate thought they had gone to sleep in the hold.

"They've swum ashore in the night, Pack," said the supercargo to Packenham. "I believe the old fellow will be content to die of starvation—hallo! here's Mac coming off in his boat!" In less than ten minutes the trader's boat was close to the ship, and Macpherson, bringing her up to the wind close under the brig's stern, hailed Packenham,

"Hae ye seen anything o' the old man Rimé?"

"No," answered the captain, "the old fool cleared out last night. Isn't he on shore?"

"No. An' there's a canoe missing from the beach, an' I believe the auld Papist fule has taken the wee bit lassie wi' him, an' thinks he can get to Ponape, whaur there's 'Katolikos' in plenty. An' Ponape is sax hundred miles awa'."

"Well, come aboard and get some breakfast."

"Man, I'm going after the auld fule! He's got no sail an' canna be twenty mile awa'. I'll pick him up before he gets to Milli Lagoon, which is only saxty miles from here."

Packenham swore. "You infernal ass! Are you going to sea in a breeze like this by yourself. Where's your crew?"

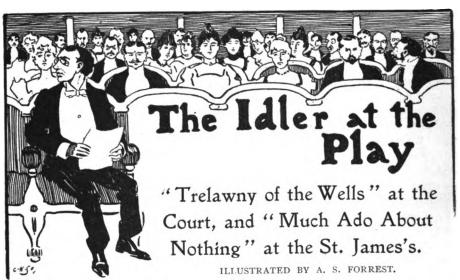
"The deevils wadna' come wi' me. An' I'm not going to let the auld fule perish."

"Then come alongside and take a couple of our Savage Island boys. I can spare them."

"No, no, captain. I'm not going tae delay ye when ye're bound to the eastward and I'm going the ither way. Ye'll find me here safe enough when ye come back in anither month. An' I'll pick up the auld deevil and the wee bit lassie before mid-day."

And then, with his red beard spreading out across his shoulders, Macpherson let his boat pay off before the wind. In an hour he was out of sight.

Three weeks afterwards, the Sadie Perkins, sperm whaler of New Bedford, picked up a boat five hundred miles west of Mādurŏ. In the stern sheets lay what had once been Macpherson, the "auld fule Papist, and the wee bit lassie."



I.—"TRELAWNY OF THE WELLS" AT THE COURT.



Y maiden aunt, my only maiden aunt, had expressed so strong a desire to see this play, and had aimed her wish so pointedly at my head, that I felt it a solemn duty to take her. The dear old lady had not been to a theatre for five-and-twenty years, but the mere mention of the early

'sixties, together with some drawings which she had seen in the illustrated papers, served to set her all a flutter, and she was bent on taking this backward glance into the period of her youth. When I called for her on the evening in question she received me with a tremulous pleasure that really moved me, the more particularly as she had set out for my refreshment a variety of cakes and wine which I was not, unfortunately, able to touch. She had insisted on providing the carriage (she still seems to think I am a boy and quite penniless,—"your family were always improvident,"

she says), and a very nice turn-out it was. As I held open the door for her she rustled through with a sweep that suggested crinolines: she was already, I could see, back in that so long past youth of hers.

She created quite a sensation as she took her seat in the theatre: my aunt is still a handsome woman, and exhales a kind of distinguished gentility as dead rose-leaves exhale perfume. But she had eyes for nothing but the stage; even the curtain had more interest for her than the audience, and when the overture began I thought she would have got up and danced.

Trelawny of the Wells is one more example of the fact that plot goes for very little and that treatment is almost everything. Here we have a play in which an aristocrat is in love with an actress (a social difficulty that did not die with the early 'sixties), and the aristocrat's people, as a preliminary to their consent to the marriage, have insisted that she shall spend some weeks with them in Cavendish Square. She goes, and very naturally

and quite inevitably sickens of the deadly dullness of the new life into which she has been so unfortunately introduced.



She throws it up. returns to her old companions, is visited later by her lover's father, who has a vague idea that he "should do something for her," and that old starched individual is induced. momentary weakness, to finance a new play written by one of the members of the "Wells" company. In meantime, of course,

turned actor the love-sick son has and is cast for one of the parts: at the first rehearsal he meets his lady in the presence of his unsuspecting father, and the curtain falls upon what promises to be a reconciliation all round. That, and no more, is the story; but by means of careful contrast, admirable dialogue, and a master's eye for effect, Mr. Pinero has succeeded in producing one of the most delightful comedies we have had for some years. He has treated it with a point and humour, a kindly half-cynical realism and tact, that make the play go unflaggingly from start to finish.

The curtain rises upon a farewell dinner given to Rose Trelawny (Miss Irene Vanbrugh) by the members of the "Wells" company, and a very entertaining, squalid, boisterous dinner it is. The low comedy man, Augustus Colpoys, played very vigorously by Mr. E. M. Robson, carries in dishes on his head; beer in vast jugs is brought from somewhere round the corner; the heavy tragedy man, Ferdinand Gadd (Mr. Gerald du Maurier), picks a chicken bone with his teeth and scornfully inveighs against people who say that an

actor is not a gentleman, and James Telfer (Mr. ATHOL FORDE) makes a speech in his best stage manner, with doubtful "h's," deploring the departure of Rose, complimenting his young friend, "whose chariot is then at the door," upon his good fortune, and continually appealing to Mrs. Telfer (Mrs. E. SAKER) for correction and support. this scene, punctuated by wild applause and the antics of Colpoys, Arthur Gower (Mr. James Erskine) sits an embarrassed spectator, and when his time for reply comes makes a hopeless muddle of it. Tom Wrench, a better author than actor, and the nearest approach to a gentleman in this strange crew, is exceedingly well played by MR. PAUL ARTHUR. MR. ARTHUR'S voice strikes me as curiously like Mr. Wyndham's; once or twice when he was speaking I closed my eyes to make sure of it. With this voice and his other excellent qualities as an actorreserve, intelligence, and easy gesture, MR. ARTHUR should go a long way.

This act, reeking of the footlights, in which everybody poses or struts, declaims, or vents petty jealousies, pleases the audience immensely. It is sordid, almost



squalid, vulgar, and in a manner mean, yet the milk of human kindness in these people is hardly less obvious than their glaring folly. The light thrown upon the inner life of the "profession," as minor actors love to call it, is fierce, but I think



not unkindly, and of course we all know that none of the actors at The Court go home to dingy lodgings in Brydon Crescent, Clerkenwell!

My aunt, during this act, was very quiet. She was keenly interested in the dresses, but I think the atmosphere pained her; it was all so different from anything she had ever seen, and I believe it killed some of her illusions. When I asked her what she thought of it, she said it was "rather dreadful—so very low," and requested me to pass her the vinaigrette which she had entrusted to my keeping.

But the second act, at Sir William Gower's, in Cavendish Square, pleased her mightily. I am sure no household with which my aunt was ever connected could have been so hideously dull as this, but the surroundings were familiar, and in a moment she consulted her programme, and had her hand upon my arm.

"Do look at Miss Gower, my dear," she whispered. She was all aglow with excitement. "I had a dress just like that when Captain Haye—"

"Yes," I said, "Captain Haye?" She dropped her vinaigrette, and I had to grope after it for her. When I looked at

her again her lips were tightly pressed together and there was the light of old memories in her eyes.

"Never mind him," she said, "I had a dress like that." I had always been certain that so fine a woman as my aunt must have had some romance in her life; it must have been connected with Captain Haye. I dropped my eyes from her beautiful old face to her slim hand. Had the ring that showed under her glove anything to do with Captain Haye?

Poor Rose Trelawney is at sea in Cavendish Square. Vice-Chancellor Sir William Gower (MR. DION BOUCICAULT), with his formality and snuff-box, is sheer poison to her, and his sister, Miss Trafalgar Gower (Miss Isabel Bateman), is something worse. Their efforts to teach her the elements of "genteel" deportment are gall and wormwood to her, and she refuses to drink of that bitter cup; according to their rigid rules she does not even know how to sit upon a "cheer" properly. Then she finds Sir William's snuff-box, takes a pinch, and is hurried from the room in a fit of violent sneezing by the scandalised whist-party, which includes Clara and Captain de Fœnix (Miss EVA WILLIAMS and MR. SAM SOTHERN). The poor child fills up the measure of her enormity by playing a popular

song in an a djoining room. It must be confessed that she does not receive much practical aid from her lover; it is a weak part but need hardly have



been played with the extreme flaccidity with which MR. ERSKINE invested it. When the company has retired, which they do to

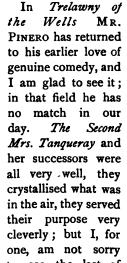
the outside accompaniment of a terrific thunderstorm, Miss Trelawny comes back and is handed a note by the footman. The entire "Wells" company are waiting to see her, standing in the rain against the opposite railings. She despatches the man to bring them in, and in they come, wet, bedraggled, but happy. They say they will drink "anything that goes with stout," smoke dirty pipes, wipe their boots on the carpet, and do various other things, which end in a free fight between Gadd and Colpoys over the degree of familiarity to be observed by the latter towards the

former's wife, Avonia Bunn, very prettily played by MISS PATTIE BROWNE. In the midst of the hubbub Sir William and his sister enter in their dressing-gowns, and the act closes with the departure of Rose in the company of her triumphant friends.

The next act, in which we return to Brydon Crescent, is in many ways the best in the play.

The scene between Rose and William is delightful; the old man's increased respect for the girl when he hears that her mother played Ophelia to KEAN'S Hamlet is a touch very cleverly suggested by Mr. Boucicault, and his trembling assumption of Richard's badge and sword and his "He was a little man, too," are in the spirit of genuine comedy, with an under-note almost pathetic. in this act, too, that MR. ARTHUR has his opportunity, of which he takes every advantage, the timely offer of financial aid in the production of his drama at the Pantheon Theatre under Imogen Parrott (MISS HILDA SPONG) coming just in time to prevent his playing the less creditable portion of the dragon in the "Wells" pantomime.

The last act, on the stage at the Pantheon, during the first rehearsal, brings the lovers together in Sir William's presence, who, somewhat repenting of his connection with these strange folks, is watching the proceedings from a stage-box. It is a sufficiently ingenious conclusion, but not very neatly worked out. Why does Mr. Pinero nearly always appear to be a little tired of his own plays in the last act? In this instance, at any rate, there is no reason for it.



to see the last of them. During the last two or three years the current has set in a healthier direction and Trelawny of the Wells is an indication of it. It is an honest, human, delightful piece of work, and, although it has truthfully sordid patches, it is always clean. Mr. Pinero has coquetted with almost every form of drama; it is surely time that he settled down and set up housekeeping with "comedy" written over the door.

My aunt's incursion into the world of theatres seemed to have saddened her. As we drove to her house I could see that she was busy with that past episode of which she had unconsciously given me a glimpse, but to me she was particularly



tender, and thanked me again and again for the "treat." As I walked up the steps to the door with her she held aloof from me as though a crinoline made distance necessary, and on my honour I could almost have believed that she had a hair-net under her hood.

II.—" MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING" AT THE ST. JAMES'S.

I did not take my aunt to *Much Ado About Nothing*: however much one may honour and respect one's own family, it is impossible, and also impolitic, to have a member of it always at one's elbow. I had a companion, but it would interest no one to read who it was; it happened, however, to be of profound interest to me.

The pit was crowded with the faces of familiar first-nighters, those patient souls who endure weariness, and hunger, and thirst for a good seat, and the stalls, too, were sprinkled with people who are familiar to a wider public. On my right sat my companion, on my left, a gentleman who appeared to think himself important, although I had never set eyes on him before. Behind me was an eminent dramatic critic, just before me a distinguished novelist who wears his honours lightly. It was a good audience, and there was much conjecture in the air: What would Miss Julia Neilson make of Beatrice? How would Mr. ALEX-ANDER read Benedick, and would Dogberry stumble with adequate gusto into his unconscious humours? Ouestions. in the main, satisfactorily answered later

Of the gems of comedy Much Ado About Nothing surely stands for the opal, just as Twelfth Night represents the pearl. It glows and changes from colour to colour and from mood to mood with amazing quickness, now light, now dark, now a flush of rose and again veined with opposing contrasts. Here it is pure wit, the very cream of verbal fence and dexterity, there

wit veiled in growing tenderness; here broad comedy and delighted laughter, there moving to the music of Claudio's "solemn hymn." Provided that it be adequately represented there is no play more delightful to watch, and that in spite of a plot the most unlikely in the world, turning upon a point, the supposed death of Hero, which the slightest enquiry would have shown to be a pretence.

The setting of this revival is beautiful; in these days we may always be sure of satisfied eyes, at any rate. The Court, Balcony, and Great Hall of Leonato's house in Messina are charming in arrangement and colour, and the grouping of the vivid figures of lords and courtiers, soldiers and attendants, as brilliant and effective as we could wish. Leonato's orchard, with its alley of trellised vines, is as pleasant a place to dream away a summer afternoon in, with a companion, as I ever saw, and the interior of the church in the fourth act, reaches, I think, the highest point that has yet been touched, scenically, during Mr. ALEXANDER'S management; the smell of incense was all over the house three minutes before the curtain rose.

Both Miss Neilson and Mr. Alexan-DER read their parts as candid comedy; neither of them has attempted new readings; neither has endeavoured to be particularly subtle. For this reading a great deal may be said; indeed, I am not sure that almost everything may not be said for it. It often appears to me that nowadays we have too much talk of "subtlety"; the word has become a kind of weariness. If we can have breadth and subtlety combined, by all means let us have them; but if the former is to be sacrificed to the latter, emphatically, no! MR. ALEXANDER plays broadly. His Benedick is an easy, light-hearted, wellconditioned fellow, very well pleased with himself and with the world, a good soldier, a gay companion, a candid friend, and, when his time comes to love, or rather when circumstances show him that he is already in love, a very graceful and convincing lover. I do not say that Benedick might not be played better, but I do say that MR. ALEXANDER plays the part very well.

MISS JULIA NEILSON'S Beatrice matches this rendering admirably. It may be a little too light, almost frivolous at times, and it is certainly often too self-conscious—the beautiful woman rejoicing in her beauty simply; but the presentation has a spontaneity that is as unexpected as it is delightful, a spirit of openness and grace that take both ear and eye captive, and in the deeper passages a reserve

which I have not observed in MISS NEILSON before. The scene between Beatrice and Benedick after the interrupted wedding is memorably good, rising by well-grasped stages from the almost snappishness of the opening dialogue to the perfectly serious pledging of Benedick's honour to challenge Claudio. Indeed, whenever these two delightful creatures are on the stage, whether at fence or love-making, one is very well content to listen;

it is a world of wit, of beauty, of true womanliness; in short, it is a delicious world, until the curtain comes down, and one has to turn out into the street.

The Don Pedro of Mr. Fred Terry is robust, almost, I think, too robust, and at times it skims too near the edge of low comedy; it is never weak, however, and when the occasion demands it as good as we have any right to expect. When shall we have an actor who renders impersonal verse even tolerably, verse of the kind which is scattered over nearly every page of Shakespeare? Mr. Terry's delivery of the lines

Good morrow, masters; put your torches out:

The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,

Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about Dapples the drowsy East with spots of grey,

was so terribly vapid and uninspired that I shuddered and could have hidden my face in confusion!

The part of Don John, although small in itself, is just one of those parts which require throwing out in strong relief; he is a dark, sinister figure, having himself no joy in life yet envious of it in others; it gives an actor a chance. Mr. H. B. IRVING, whose acting has immensely improved of late, plays it remarkably well and with a certain sardonic humour that makes it bite.

Claudio requires what some critics are

fond of calling an "earnest" representative; the word is somewhat ambiguous, but certainly Mr. Robert Loraine is earnest with a vengeance. A more moping, melancholy lover than this sighing gentleman it would be difficult to imagine; there is no reason either in nature or Shakespeare for it; that he ever looked upon Hero with "a soldier's eye" is hardly conceivable, and that he would



at any time "have walked ten miles a foot to see a good armour," a thing beyond belief. In the church scene MR. LORAINE'S earnestness was of some value, and told, but the rest of his performance needs touching up sadly. I was disappointed in him; his playing of Kit French in Admiral Guinea had led me to expect something much better than this Claudio. It is not an easy part to play sympathetically; the man who could publicly denounce the woman he loved as a wanton, and that without even searching for an explanation that would have left her honour clean, is either a very young fool, or a cad in grain. The Claudio of the play is neither, but we regard these little inconsistencies in

SHAKESPEARE as no more than moles upon beauty's skin.

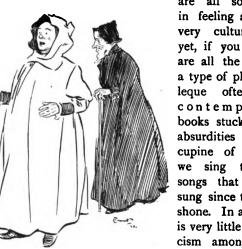
From Miss Fay Davis I am beginning to expect great things in comedy—comedy, I mean, in the wider and proper sense of the word; and, like the sincere artist I believe her to be, she keeps adding to her power, here a little and there a little, and always on sound lines. Her Hero is a performance very sweet and graceful, notably good in tone, and with passages that stick in the memory. To achieve this is one of the few lasting rewards of an art that can leave no record either to be seen or handled.

For the rest MR. W. H. VERNON made a fairly weighty Leonato, and Mr. Beveridge a capable Antonio; the Conrade of Mr. HOLMES-GORE was quite uninteresting, and the Borachio of Mr. Roys-TON the weakest thing in the play. In the drunken scene with Conrade, in which the conspiracy to ruin Hero is overheard by the watch, Mr. Royston, had not the least real appearance of drunken-

ness; he staggered about the stage, it is true, but not as a drunken man staggers, and he talked as no man in his cups ever talked in my experience. Mr. H. Vincent's Dogberry is quite good enough to make me wish that his other scene had not been cut.

It has been said, is said, and, no doubt, will continue to be said, that SHAKES-PEARE in our day is for the study and not for the stage; but I can see no solid reason in the statement. The matter is an eminently practical one: is SHAKES-PEARE to be kept away from his native footlights because we cannot find actors ideally to represent him? Such a comedy

as Much Ado About Nothing can surely always find representatives sufficiently capable to make it much better worth hearing than the ordinary melodramatic comedy, often silly and sometimes worse, of this generation. It seems to me that we cant about Shakespeare nowadays; Mr. Alexander's revival is probably much better acted than it ever was in Shakespeare's own day, when a player had to declaim and rant to be heard at all. We live, unfortunately, in a very carping but a not soundly critical age; we are for subtleties and inner meanings, and intellectual cyphers; we



are all so very fine in feeling and so very, very cultured! And yet, if you please, we are all the patrons of a type of play and buroften beneath contempt, we read books stuck as full of absurdities as a porcupine of quills, and we sing the silliest songs that were ever sung since the sun first shone. In a word, there is very little sound criticism amongst us, we have no standard of

taste, we are nearly all faddists.

By all means, then, let us have Shakespeare on the stage as well as in the study, and so long as he is as well played as in this revival of *Much Ado About Nothing*, I shall continue to be a theatre-goer. When I hear that Mr. Alexander has turned his managerial eye upon *The Taming of the Shrew* I shall feel a thrill of genuine pleasure, and Miss Neilson must play Catherine.

If the spirit of Shakespeare were hovering anywhere in the neighbourhood of St. James's as the last curtain fell, the calls for "author" must have been extremely gratifying to it. B.

HUGHIE McGLANACHIE'S COURTIN'.

BY JAMES MACMANUS (" MAC").

ILLUSTRATED BY BERNARD F. GRIBBLE.

THE way of it was this:

I was sittin' by me own fireside of a night dhrawin' on winter, smokin' an' ruminatin' over things in general, when the latch was lifted, and into me steps Hughie.

"God save all here," says he.

"Yerself likewise, an' thanky, Hughie," says I. "Pull forrid that stool to the fire, and take a sait. How is things with you?"

"Bravely, then, I thank God for all His marcies," says Hughie. "I hope your own charge is well," says he.

"Musha, then," says I, "I thank God I cannot complain at all. Things is thrivin', an' we're all hearty, an' that's something to be thankful for, as the wurrl' goes."

"Troth an' it is then," Hughie said. An' then he begun lookin' intil the fire hard, an' well I knew be him there was a somethin' a-throuble to the Dhorko.

. Ye see, we called Hughie the Dhorko bekase of the quare curious sort of a halffool he was-not but he had as much sense as you or me (an' could maybe buy an' sell both of us betimes), only he had a quare odd way o'goin' poutherin' about, same as if he wasn't all in it. An' the boys, for he was no height, took to playin' their antics on him; an' wheresomever the Dhorko was there was sure to be fun, if there was any wan by to dhraw him out; for he'd give the quarest, long-headedest, raisons of his own for things; and then when people laughed he'd get as mad as a hatter, an' set them all down as fools an' ig'orant unmannerly numskulls-an' let the counthry laugh as they might, the Dhorko always said he had as much

corract knowledge in the wee finger of him as there was in the whole bodies of any dozen of them.

Anyhow, I seen by the eye the boy had at the fire that there was somethin' a-throuble to him, an',

"Hughie," says I, "there's somethin' anondher yer hat the night."

"There is; yes, Owen-a-Slaivin, I'm ruminatin' a somethin' sure enough."

"An' might I," says I, "make bould to ax what it is, or is it an imperent question o' me?"

"Yes, Owen-a-Slaivin," says he, "ye may sartintly ax an' no imperence about it." For howsomever it come, Hughie McGlanachie always put great thrust in me; and he'd let me into secrets that he'd sooner shoot himself than tell to another o' the neighbours. "Owen," says he, "I'm goin' to get marri'd."

"Bravo, Hughie," says I, dhrawin' him a simmendable smack on the back. "Bravo, Hughie," says I, "an' the heighth o' joy I wish ye. Who's the happy girl?"

"Och," says he, "I don't know that yet. There isn't wan o' the half-haiverals o' girls iv the parish that I'd take. An' I've just turned into ye the night to know if ye could spare a day or two to go up through Dhrimholme with me, to see if we couldn't fish up some sort of a handy young woman that has got a fairish grain o' both sense an' silver, an' that 'ill shoot me in every other way," says he.

"Whew—w—w!" says I, givin' a long whistle. "An' Hughie, a gradh, is that how the hare sits?"

"Don't ye think, Owen," says he, can't ye manage to come with me? I

have big faith in yer judgment, an' I'd like ye to see the girl throtted out, an' give me yer opinion of her afore I'd come to tarms. Moreover nor that, ye're a splendid hand at a bargain. The short an' the long of it is," says he, "that I've made up my mind, buildin' upon ye to help me through, an' I'd come small speed without ye."

Well, I considered to meself that, barrin' a wheen o' ridges o' taties in the White Park that I had to dig an' pit yet, an' a wisp o' corn to thrash again' Oul' Hallowday, I had most everything snug an' thrig for the winter; an' as it was small sprees I had taken to meself since Patricksmass, I considered to meself that better I couldn't do nor accompany me frien' Hughie an' try to get some sort o' runt of a wife for him above in Dhrimholme.

"Hughie," says I, "I'm yer man. Say when ye'd like to start, an' in God's name we'll spit on our sticks an' go. So far as my poor judgment goes, it's at yer sarvice; so likewise anything else in me power."

"Give us yer fist upon that," says Hughie, grippin' me hand an' shakin' it for all it was worth. "I knew I could depend on ye, Owen-a-Slaivin. Thanky heartily, an' I must be for ever obliged to ye."

"Och, tut, tut!" says I, "for nothin'! I'd like," says I, "to see ye, Hughie, fitted in some sort of middlin' scantlin' of a woman that would look afther ye, an' be good to ye, an' look afther yer house an' place, an' keep it snug an' nate," says I. "When would ye like to start?"

"Me poor father (God rest his sowl!) used often to say to me, 'Sthrike the iron, Hughie, while it's hot.' Them was wise words, an' I always liked to act up till them. With God's help, Owen, we'll start the morra."

An' start the very next day we did, the two of us, after throwin' on us the best little duds we had, makin' ourselves as presentable lookin' as we could, bekase as I toul' Hughie, "Hughie," says I, "a good appearance is half the battle." An' the naybours they were all in a flutther of wondherment, not knowin' where both of us was off to. I gave them no insight intil the business, only threw a wink to wan or two of them, givin' them to understand there was something good behind the wind—but that only left all of them in a crueller state of cur'osity than ever.

An' upon my sawnies that was a hunt for a wife I'm not likely to forget aisy! We spent three days an' two nights up an' down the parish of Dhrimholme like men that had pins to sell, for we didn't laive three houses in the parish undone. Some of them with a heart an' a half would give us a daughther only for the good raison they had no daughther to give. Others that had the daughthers weren't satisfied to part them. At wan house we come just a day afther the market; an' at the next house we were close upon four years too soon. There was wan man (in the lower end o' Throwerstown), an' he walked us as good as two mile an' showed us a slip of a yalla-haired girl, about ten years of age, that he toul' Hughie if he choose to wait he'd rear for himbut my opinion is that this fellow was laughin' in his sleeve at us. Some girls he could get, hadn't money enough to plaise Hughie; an' others that had enough money, Hughie didn't plaise them. remember me wan house we were diracted to for a handsome girl an' a good fortune, an' sure enough we found both to be the case; an' we lost little time gettin' to business. I produced the whisky bottle and thraited both fear an tighe an' bhean an tighe*, Hughie an' meself; and then come str'ight to business. Both man an' wife was content, after I'd explained to them what way Hughie had on him (what means he possessed) at home; and then they explained for us the outs an' the ins of the way they had on them, an' what an'

* Man of the House and Woman of the House.

how much they were prepared to give the daughther, an' both Hughie an' me were well pleased with this. The match was most as good as closed, when the daughter, who all the time was hangin' her head in the chimbley corner, sthrikes up the phillaleu, cryin' and roarin' for all she was worth. "By this an' by that," says I, gettin' to me legs, "I wouldn't have a leannan-sidhe o' yer sort pipin' in me corner if ye were sent to me slated with guineas,

an' I was to be made Lord o' Mayo for it. Come away, Hughie," says I, "till ye see if we can't better ourselves elsewhere-worse we'll not get, anyhow, that's wan satisfaction." An' off with meself I marched, an' Hughie-loth enough, in trothhad to follow me. But anyhow, I wouldn't let him marry her, if there wasn't another girl to be got atween Japan an' Jamaicky, for I had me eyes open an' seen that, for all her beauty an' all her big fortune, she was a dirty slattern: the outside o' the house, like many another in the same parish, purtended a deal, but the inside was a sad sight o' dirt and disorder, everything where it shouldn't be an' nothing anywhere in particular. "Dhrimholme for ever!" says I, when we got off a bit, "Dhrimholme for ever! the white house an' the yalla blanket!" for it was often I had heerd the same thing of it, an' now I seen it with me own two eyes.

I was beginnin' to feel a thrifle onaisy, bekase I couldn't help hearin' and seein' that the pair of us was gettin' to be two walkin' jokes for the parish, an' they took me for as big a fool as me frien' Hughie, an', if anything, maybe the biggest o' the two. There was more nor wan or two heads thrust out o' the doors as we went by, an' I couldn't close me ears to the hearty laughin' behind us when we had passed.

"Now, Hughie, we're makin' purty

asses of ourselves," says I, "the way we're scuddin' an' scourin' the country an' can't get a girl to please you an' wan that you are pleasin' to at the same time. We're biddin' purty fair to become the laughin'-stock o' the country for twenty years to come. I'll tell you what it is, Hughie," says I, "wan other chance, an' wan only I'll give ye. Here's Phaylim Darragh's here beyont, that, I'm tould, has three spankin' daughters.



An' start the very next day we did.

no great shakes maybe to look at—an they'll make nothin' the worse wives for that—but they've both cash an' cattle; an' if they're a bit eldherly atself ye'll wonder, when wan o' them houlds fifty sovereigns in her fist, how young she'll look in the eyes of the lucky man as gets her. Make up yer mind, you lad you, an' put the best an' bouldest face on you ye can, for it's do or die, sink or swim, this time. Wan word of advice, too, I'd wish ye to obsarve—these Darraghs puts up to a deal o' style an' polite manners, an' troth it's

little of either ye were ever burdened with; but what little ye have ye must put on the outside, if ye want to get into their graces. As like as not, they'll make tay for us (whether our errand is welcome or not), an' I want ye to remember that it's considered by polite people to be the heighth o' bad manners to blow into yer cup: if yer tay's too hot either let it be till it cools, or else swallow it as it is an' skin your stomach---whereby ye'll show the heighth iv good breedin'so if ye suffer a trifle atself, ye'll have the satisfaction o' knowin' that it's in a If ye begin puffin' an' good cause. blowin' into it"—as I knew well he would, if he wasn't warned, bekase I seen all through our journey that he made a habit of it — "if ye begin," says I, "puffin' an' blowin' like a brokenwinded horse on a bad brae, ye'll disgust them, an' ye'll disgrace both me an' yerself-mind, don't do it." "I'll mind that," says Hughie, says he, "in case I don't forget." "An' in case ye do forget," says I, "I'll give ye a wink to put ye in mind of it, if I find ye thransgressin'. Now, remember," says I, "ye're on yer last legs, so, ax God's help, an' do yer best; be as nice, as mannerly, an' as genteel as ye can if ye want to carry It's mortial little money my mother ever paid a dancin'-masther for me," says I, "yet just obsarve how politely an' genteelly I'll carry meself off, an' ye try to take patthern by me," for I consait I can take meself off in any company with credit, both to meself an' to them raired me.

Very well an' good, into Phaylim Darragh's meself an' Hughie marches, I leadin' the way.

"God save all here," I said, "an' the grace o' God be about this house an' them's in it", as I come steppin' in.

"God save yerself, good man! an' you too," he says on Hughie who come sthragglin' at my tail, "an' my welcome to both o' ye strangers. Pull forrid to the fire.

Here's two chairs for yez. An' get you away with ye out o' that, Charmer," says he, chasing off the dog from beside the fire to make room for us.

All o' them shook hands round with us; we sat down, an' I lost small time gettin' out the quart bottle, an' wettin' the good man's an' good woman's lips with it. An' smaller time still I lost broachin' the subject. When the girls heard it they all blushed an' bent over their work—wan o' them (the ouldest) was spinnin', wan knittin,' an' wan spriggin'—hidin' their faces as best they could.

"What way has Mister McGlanachie on him"? Phaylim Darragh axed, the first question, of course."

"Ten acres o' clay-lan'," says I, "twenty-five of moss, ten head o' cattle—four o' them milk cows—an' only nine poun' o' rent."

"Very fairish," says he to that.
"Don't you think so, Nabla?"

"Oh fairish enough, indeed," says the wife back.

"This," says he, then, indicatin' the girl spinnin', ' is my eldest daughther, an' I don't mind if she marries a good match any day."

"Yes, a fine sonsy girl, in troth; an' good luck till her," says I. "Ye'll be givin' a good penny with her, I'm thinkin'."

"Money's scarce," says Phaylim.

"An' hard to get," says Nabla.

"That's John Tamson's news," says I; for the same was everybody's cry that was expected to part with any. "Ye've a good place, well stocked an' well cropped, an' can afford to give the girl a purty penny. At a word, say how much—then we'll either make a bargain or not."

He studied on himself awhile. The girl had worked round till she got her back turned to us, an' was gropin' on at her work as best she might in the dark of her own shadow.

"Forty poun', in dhry cash for my part, an' a year ould heifer," says he. "Say yer say now, Nabla." "For my part," says his wife, "I'll add on a complete set of linens, beddin', and blankets, three new dresses, an' me blissin'."

It was my time to study now.

"It'll not do, Phaylim Darragh," I says.
"Say sixty poun' in hard cash, an' the other items besides, an' it's a bargain.
Otherwise we go, an' laive the girl to her own fireside."

"An' there we'll never tire of her, take my word for that. I'll never say sixty. Though I'm her father that says it, a better girl nor a more gainin' never broke bread."

"We don't doubt that. Be all accounts we've heerd she's what ye say—an more. But if she was the best girl in the wurrl' I wouldn't counsel me friend here to take any man's daughther to support her, onless he gets what I'd call a good equivalent—an' forty poun' with the other things mentioned is not a good equivalent."

"He'll not have to support her—she'll support herself. Ye know little the value's in that girl. That girl could a'most live on the air. If Madge was picked up, an' dhropped in the sands of a desert she'd come back a rich woman in less than no time. That girl's a fortune in herself, if yer friend never got a ha'penny with her."

But the long an' the short of it was that, after a lot of hagglin'—for Phaylim was a stiff wan to dail with—he consented to fortune Madge with fifty poun' an' the other articles mentioned, an' let Hughie McGlanachie have her.

An' then it wasn't to tay we were invited at all, but the best of a dinner. For they killed a turkey for us—no less—an' prepared a grand mail entirely. But the very grandeur o' the thing vexed me, bekase I knew Hughie would never know how to take himself off either to their plaisement or mine.

An' sure enough, when the dinner was laid down—one that might well temp' a dead man to ait—Hughie lost no time

startin' to blow an' to puff intil his bowl o' broth, that was steamin' hot, as if he was doin' it for a wager. I stopped him from it two or three times when he caught me eye winkin' at him-but I might as well think to stop the flow of the Boyne Wather, for in another minute he'd forget himself an' be puffin' intil the bowl like one paid for it. An' I caught him up so many times-for I noticed the Darraghs was obsarvin' him—that at last he lost his temper an' he bawls at me, "There ye're winkin' an' squinkin' till ye have yer eyelid 'most knocked out o' joint, an' conshumin' to me if ye don't stop winkin' at me, but I'll blow waves on it!"

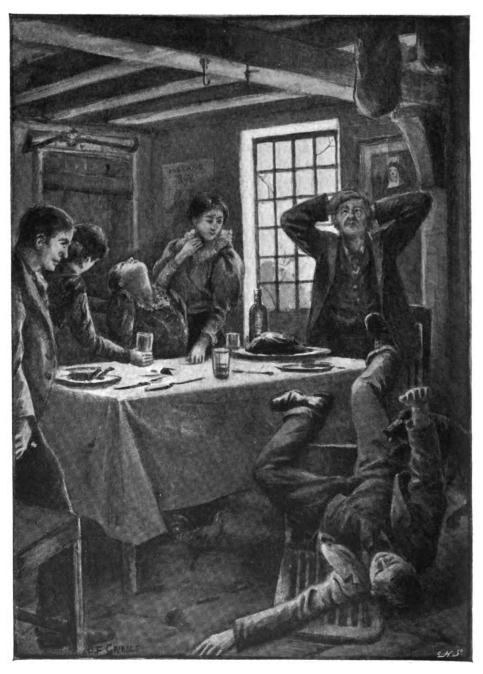
He dumfoundhered me quite, an' I wouldn't like to have come home to me the same prayer I prayed on him undher me breath. But the turkey come on the table at this, an' says Phaylim Darragh, says he, "Now, Misther McGlanachie, you'll plaise do us the honour of carvin' this little fowl!"

Here was a how-do-ye-do! We were goin' to be disgraced out-an'-out, for I knew well that Hughie could as aisily carve a fowl as construct an ai'-day clock; an' as for meself I knew as much about carvin' as I did about Conney (Conic) Sections. But it's seldom ever Owen-a-Slaivin was put in a corner yet, an' couldn't come out with credit—though it's himself says it, that maybe shouldn't.

"Sir," says I, back to Darragh. "Sir," says I, "if ye'll allow me, I'm me frien' Misther McGlanachie's right-han' man, an' considher it me duty to do these little jobs for him, though I know well I can't do it wan half so well as me friend can, who is notorious as a carver in our own country, an' has been pronounced, by no less a judge than the schoolmasther, fit to carve for a cardinal."

"Oh! very well, very well," says Darragh, "just as you plaise."

So to my feet I got, an' takin' the knife, began to sharpin it on the fork as I had seen Father Dan do when he was carvin'



Comes down, chair an' all.

at Pathrick Hamilton's weddin'—though what I was goin' to do next with the knife I knew no more nor than the man in the moon.

"Now," says I, when I had it sharpened to my satisfaction, "I can carve this fowl in any wan of three ways that may plaise ye. I can carve it in either the English fashion, the Scotch, or the Irish. Which way would you be plaised to prefer, sir?"

"Oh!" says Darragh, lookin' astonished at my abilities, I can assure ye—"Oh!" says he, "I suppose as we're in Irelan', we may as well have it carved afther the Irish fashion."

"Very well, an' good," says I, dhroppin' both knife and fork, an' catchin' hold of the turkey by both legs, "afther the Irish fashion, then, we'll do it." An' I pulled off wan leg an' threw it on wan of their plates, another leg an' threw it on another plate, a pair o' wings on the next plate, an' so on till I divided the turkey as nicely an' as evenly over the table as if the King's carver himself had been at it with a silver knife an' a goolden fork; an' all fell to their dinner contented.

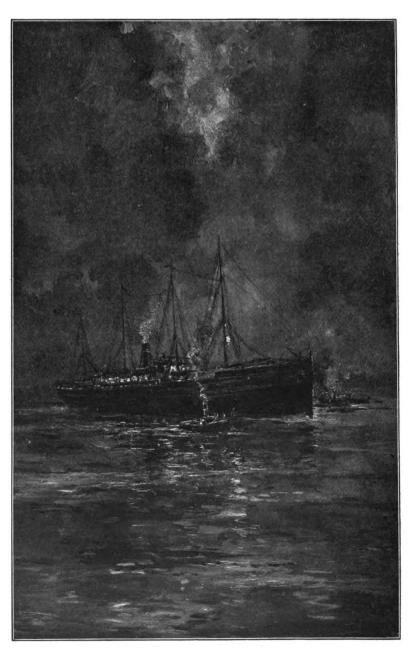
But the dinner, I'm sorry to say, didn't end as peacefully. For, I had given Hughie the whisper that it was a black shame for him, an' very ig'orant lookin' of him, not to show Madge some wee courtin' attentions. "If nothin' else," says I, back an' forrid during the dinner, "ye can press her foot under the table, an' then rowl yer eyes, to let her see how bad the love has taken ye." For anything more Hughie was too backward and bashful, but he thought he could

manage this. So, durin' the dinner, Madge bein' sittin' right fornenst (opposite to) him, he reached out his foot an' pressed aisy; but she didn't show any sign, so he pressed again. Still it seemed not to affect her, so the short temper got the better of Hughie once more, an', "Be the holy piper," he says to himself, "I'll take some sign out o' ye!" an' down he brings his foot as if he was killin' clocks. An' with that the yowl an' the howl goes up from anondher the table, an' then a scream an' a yell from Hughie, who jumps a foot high out of his chair, an' comes down chair an' all, on the broad of his back on the floor, with Darragh's big black dog atop of him, the dog worryin' an' he bellowin' an' the girls screamin', an' the mother faintin', and all the house in an uproar that would frighten the divil, till the dog was got beaten off and beaten out of the househe goin' dhir-r-r-in', an' lookin' back over his shoulder, as much as to say that he hadn't his account squared with Hughie

It's little I could aise my mind on Hughie, seein' he was in the sthrange place; but it's a shamed face I had for him. I had to stand by him till we got the marriage off an' the bride home; an' when I got the opportunity then I gave him a piece of me tongue—but its my opinion you might as well jaw a firblock from the bottom o' the bog. But I, then an' there, gave me word that I'd think twice afore I'd go such a fool's arrand with a fool again.

An', in troth, there'll be two new moons in the sky and wan in the du'ghill when I do.





OUTWARD BOUND.

THE PULSE OF THE WORLD.

BY ARTHUR M. YOUNG.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. ARTHUR ROUSE.

PART II.

CUDDENLY a commotion in the crowd causes all heads to turn in one direction, until the sea of upturned faces looks ghastly in the lamplight. Shrill over the tumult breaks a woman's voice, and, with her bonnet hanging by the strings and her loose blouse open at the throat, her dress torn from the gathers by her struggle to get through the crowd, she forces herself in between the two men. With a half-uttered imprecation she bends over the fallen figure, and, giving it a rough shake, calls him by his name. Knocked almost senseless, with all the breath pumped out of his body, he does not answer. With a low cry the woman falls on her knees by his side and takes his head in her arms. The light falls full upon his face, which is like nothing human in the world. The blood is streaming down from a gash in his forehead, and the features are battered and swollen out of all recognition. The crowd is strangely silent—a sudden dread has fallen upon it. The conqueror, wiping the gory sweat from his face, steps awkwardly forward, and attempts some words of explanation. "'E dun it 'isself," he observes, "'e arst fur it." The woman waves him off with an impatient gesture and lifts the aching head a little higher. Someone, with more thought than the rest, has run into one of the neighbouring pubs., and a barman, his white apron gleaming, dashes some water from the can he has in his hand over the prostrate figure. Revived by the impact, the man slowly rises to his feet. . . . The crowd, relieved, sets up a cheer. . . .

The helmets of the police are seen working their way through, scattering the people right and left. Half a dozen of them crowd round the victor and hustle him down a by-street. The vanquished, accompanied by his female ministress, staggers off in the opposite direction. The people, dissolved into motley groups, disperse as if by magic, and the black water, visible once more, laughs as it plunges towards the sea.

It is Saturday night, and the quaint old High Street is full of people. The hoarse shouts of the different tradesmen extolling their wares upon the pavement mingles with the rattle of wheels and the roar of the The naphtha-lamps gutter and street. leap as the wind beats them, and the whole scene is indescribably animated. public-houses are driving a furious trade, and the clink of glass and the rattle of tins are heard above the din. A drunken sailor lurches down the road like a rudderless North Sea fishing-smack in choppy water. A group of frowsy women stand and gesticulate at the corner. The screams of the vendors are redoubled. A soldier. with a companion on either arm clumsily imitating his martial swagger, passes. Three loafers, howling a ribald chorus, shoulder their way through the press. A seafaring man, with a buxom, pleasantfeatured woman upon his arm, lingers hesitatingly in front of the slop-shop. All is bustle and movement and colour—a glowing page torn bodily out of the book of life. On either side labyrinths of grimy passages, with their evil-smelling fried-fish and shrimp houses, offend the nostril.

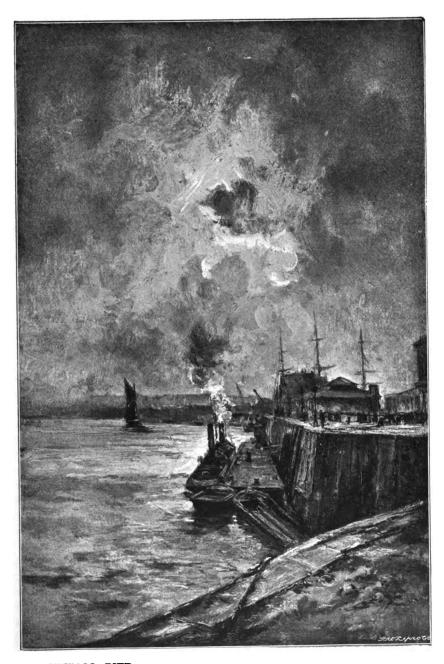
Midway up the narrow street stands the market, and passing through the pillars we enter. Half-a-dozen steps lead to the central transept, flanked on either hand by great columns running to the roof, smoked black with gas and age. An auctioneer with brazen lungs is selling garments to a number of working-men who do not want them; he gesticulates, and the crowd laughs; he is indignant, and they stand chided; he is sarcastic, and they buy. Here are to be found all things useful and useless; all food and raiment which the working-classes need. A barrow piled high with broken sweets rubs shoulders with a fish-stall, on which the crimson cod's roe trembles in jellified heaps. The pungent odour of coltsfoot rock mingles with the smell of the whelks and vinegar, and both are incorporated in the delicate perfume of the burning oil. Oranges, old clothes, fried-fish and onions, all contribute to the flavour of the Gravesend market! The rough floor is cobbled with round stones, worn flat with age and the tramp of many feet. grey walls are fretted with stains and hung with cobwebs. The roof is gabled, and the whole place is reminiscent of a bygone day, when rollicking sea-dogs, fresh from some piratical mission on the Spanish main, came to spend their prize money in an orgy of dissipation.

Out once more in the narrow street, down which kings and queens and cardinals have made their way in the good old days. The pubs. are closing now, and the excited revellers are staggering off to their respective homes. knots of lingering cronies are standing at the corners. A couple of policemen pass, dragging a raving, shouting roysterer, who has drunk himself into a fit. ragged urchins run wildly out of one of the blind alleys and follow to the station in a frenzy of delight. Another halfhour and the streets are deserted. moon rolls out of a bank of cloud, and smiles down upon roof-tree and

The houses, mostly of wood, rafter. with projecting porches and overhanging eaves, wherein deep shadows lurk, with pointed roofs and signboards hung from every door, throw their long outlines across the road. The footfall of a solitary wayfarer passing down the street rings into silence. Higher and higher climbs the moon; paler and paler the lamps flicker in the distance; longer and more intense become the shadows; taller and more grotesque the quaint old houses: the clock on the market-place hammers out the hour; one by one the lights in the windows are extinguished, and midnight, like some great kindly mother, draws her mantle over the sleeping town.

Sunday morning. The fog hangs over the river like a shroud, thick, white, and impenetrable. The ferry-boats are lying at the pier-head, their outlines dimly traceable. Out in mid-stream the muffled sound of the fog-horn is stifled almost before it reaches us. There is no sign of activity: the boats will not run this morning, the weather is too dense. Two or three men. mostly seamen from Tilbury, are bargaining with a couple of boatmen to take them over. The men demur. It is too thick: they may be run down in the fog or drift about helplessly. The sailors per-We add our persuasion, backed by silver argument, and they hesitate. Like all people who hesitate, they agree. A little stiff-nosed wherry is lying by the pierhead, rising and falling with the swell of the tide. Hastily throwing in a square box, they descend a rope-ladder. follow, and, taking our seats on the wet thwarts, we glide into the mist.

The raw morning air bites sharply into our flesh. The men bend to the oars, as with twisted bodies they turn to consult the little square box in the bow. We are steering by compass, as the only means of getting through that winding sheet of white. The shadowy forms of our companions loom through the fog like strange figures out of some phantom tale, and the



BLACKWALL PIER.

steady plash-plash of the steaming blades is all we can hear. Suddenly, dead ahead, a dark form towers high above us; the rowers churn the water furiously, as they stop the boat, and more by good luck than anything else we escape a collision with our old friend the Brazilian gun-

boat. Fast as the foam flashes out of sight we slip with the racing stream past her, and once more by the aid of the trusty compass steer our course. At length the men pause and hail lustily. Their voices reverberate in hollow cadences in the heavy air. An answering shout, deadened and almost inaudible, slowly reaches us. The boat's head is once more turned up stream; a minutes few



Gravesend Market Hall.

pass, minutes of straining eyes and listening ears, and we reach the pierhead, and scramble up the steep side. Tilbury is, save for the Docks, at best a dreary place, with the flat desolation of the marshes running to the horizon. Now the kindly mist veils all. The gallant little steamer waiting to convey us to London at the pierhead must vent her steam in durance until it

lifts. With the help of one of the sailors we grope our way to the hotel, and proceed to give our impatience a rest with the sustaining help of something hot. About three o'clock the weather is clearer, and one of the men comes to inform us a start can be made. We climb down into

the boat, and with a snort and a scream are off!

From Tilbury to Bow Creek, past Purfleet, where the Virgin Queen watched the return of her "little pirate." Drake, and his gallant band of British ships, fresh from their victory over the Armada; through Erith Roads, up Barking Reach, by Charlton Pier, round Lea Ness, to where the Blackwall Tunnel burrows through

the Thames bed—here are the great flood-gates of the East India Docks, through which has passed so many a magnificent Castle Liner on her voyage to the South African goldfields. Lying by the main gate we gaze across to where Bow Creek marks a space in the forest of masts and spars which line the bank.

Night is falling now, and the purple

distance takes a deeper hue. The smoke from countless funnels curls wreathing upwards, and the hoarse rattle of chains and the shrill scream of the sirens are borne across the river. A tug with its complement of hull-deep barges pants its way up stream, and the landing-stage looms dark and forbidding in the half-Drifting masses of cloud proclaim a wild night, and the straining cordage rasps in the wind. Here a Danish brig, with topsail furled, prepares to cast her anchor; there a timber boat is being piloted to her moorings. The inevitable lighter drifts helplessly down stream and becomes entangled in the shipping. the right Blackwall Pier, with its railway station just visible, and the tall masts of the vessels in the West India Docks towering above the skyline, frowns a mass of rough and solid timber. A couple of tugs are snorting by the landing-stage, and the shrill whistle of the escaping steam rings out over the water. A sailing barge is heading her way to the Pool. A few stragglers are on the pier, and the distant thud-thud of the engines comes to us on the wind from the Isle of Dogs. Away to the left the spars of the shipping are lost in gloom. The picturesque China tea clipper, with its rakish masts, has given place to the faster steamer, but a few still linger to connect us with the past. The Tantallon Castle is preparing for her long voyage, and taking aboard her passengers. On the opposite side are

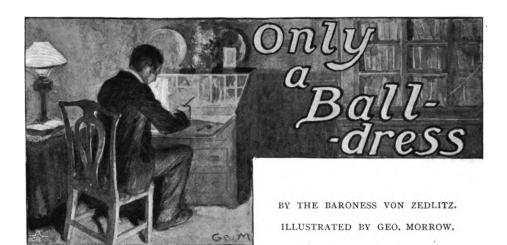
the Commercial Docks, their basins full of trading vessels of all nations, while above Blackwall, a group of barges stand in picturesque confusion against the wharf. As well as the gathering darkness will permit, we see the horizon barred by shaft, and spar, and chimney. drifting moon touches the nearer objects with a refining hand, and casts a broad pale band of light upon the water, rendering the dark shadows all the deeper for the silver; from many a wide funnel the languid smoke curls upwards; the darkness grows; the boats are deserted, not a figure is seen upon the empty wharfs; and over all a subtle mystery is creeping.

Far from the summit of our mysteries,
Across the wastes, high over mist and dreams,
A star is set serene,
A star of wondrous sheen
That burns, and glows, and radiates, and gleams;

That burns without a flame
Of fire or kindred light;
That glows without desire
And yet is bright,
Beyond our contemplation or our skill,
A globe of flameless fire superb and still.

The star of Even and the Ultimate,
The one immortal harbour of the mind,
Which knowing not we see;
Born of the great To Be,
Which to behold we first are rendered blind.

The pulse is beating feebler now, the illimitable mystery of night and silence is falling on the world's Great Heart.



R. FRED. MAARTIN sat in his study deeply plunged in serious meditation. He took a letter from his pocket, lighted his pipe, stirred the dying embers of the fire into a slight flicker, and then re-read the note he had received that morning.

It was from a girl, and was written in a large, bold hand, on a flimsy piece of cheap note-paper. The envelope which enclosed it was too small for the letter, and the latter had been folded over twice. Two ugly finger-marks were visible upon it. Perhaps these details annoyed Dr. Maartin; at any rate they did not escape him. Miss Angela Crowe had written as follows:

"MY DEAR DR. MAARTIN,-

"I hope you have not forgotten Mde. De Solla's ball to-morrow night, nor that I am engaged to you for the three first valses. I am looking forward to it most awfully, and shall be fearfully dissapointed "—("Two s's and one p," Dr. Maartin groaned to himself)—"if you are not there in time for the first. I have been having a very busy time at home these last few days, because mother is ill again. She is much worse to-night. Father says her heart is wrong, and she can't bear to be left a moment. I hope she won't want me just when I am dressing for the ball, or she may try to keep me from going. I shall, however, slip out quietly, and then she won't know,

It would be very unkind of mother to begrudge me a little pleasure, especially as I have been stuck in the house without a breath of fresh air for days. Mother's bell is ringing again (it never does anything else), and so I must close. Goodbye till to-morrow.

" Yours always,

"ANGELA CROWE.

"P.S.—Please come as early as you can, so will I."

Dr. Fred. Maartin, contrary to Miss Crowe's expectations, was far from pleased with the contents of her letter. It was preposterous, he thought, for her to talk of going to a ball with her mother lying ill and suffering at home. He would write her a few lines to tell her not to dream of leaving the sick woman. Turning to his desk he wrote:

"DEAR MISS CROWE,-

"All the balls in Christendom are not worth your leaving your mother when she is ill, if only for a minute. Much as I shall regret missing our dances, they are, I trust, only pleasures deferred, and I sincerely hope Mrs. Crowe will soon recover by the aid of your careful nursing.

"Believe me, yours faithfully,
"FREDERICK MAARTIN."

"She cannot go after this," he thought, "it would be too inhuman." He sealed his letter and rang for the servant to post it at once.

Dr. Maartin was enjoying a nice little practice in Mayfair, added to which a comfortable private income made him a very desirable partie. Several matchmaking mammas had already got their weather-eyes on him as being "the very man of all others whom they could tolerate as their son-in-law," but Dr. Fred. was not to be hastily caught in the matrimonial noose until he himself could find the young lady after his own heart. Miss Angela Crowe was certainly very attractive; this fact he had repeatedly acknowledged to himself; but he would have liked her a thousand times better if she had not shown him quite such marked favour in the presence of their mutual At tennis parties she would always seek him out and drag him off triumphantly to play as her partner, and wherever they happened to meet, he would always find himself by her side, secured for the afternoon or evening, with no possible chance of escape from the glamour of her huge black eyes, which looked him through and through. He intensely admired her handsome face and faultless figure, and yet she would do and say things of which he strongly disapproved. Sometimes she would giggle in a senseless way about nothing, and sometimes she said "damn," a word he hated to hear rom a woman's lips.

He could not help being flattered, however, at the way in which she singled him out, and yet he would have preferred her indifference at times to her constant partiality. Everybody was talking about his flirtation with Miss Crowe, and he was doubtful as to whether he quite liked it or As for Angela, she left little doubt in the minds of her friends as to what her intentions were. She liked to be chaffed about the handsome young doctor, and took the greatest delight in hearing her name coupled with his. Why not? He was a very good match, she was the daughter of a doctor, and she was sure all the girls were furiously jealous, because he so openly expressed his admiration for her. Besides, her father's practice was not what it had been, and theirs was a very poor family. It was her duty to marry well, her mother had often told her so. She was constantly in trouble at home about the bills she had incurred, and once her father struck her because she had obtained credit at a neighbouring draper's in his name. She was always in tears at home, she confessed to her friends, and it was a miserable life to lead. No wonder she was anxious to marry.

Dr. Fred. was also anxious to see a pretty, elegant wife at the head of his table, and, be the truth confessed, he had, at times, considered the possibility of proposing to Angela Crowe. A doctor stood at great disadvantage, he had been told, without a lady to preside in his home, and with this object in view he determined to look about him for the sort of woman whom he could not only love but respect. Angela Crowe was attractive, amusing, and interesting; was she, however, a girl of whom he would be thoroughly proud? Would she not shock his sensibilities, or those of his guests, with her loud fun and mocking laughter? He dwelt upon every detail of her appearance, as he sat there undisturbed in his study, and it occurred to him that her hair was too châtain to be natural, and that her smile was not always agreeable, because her teeth were set too far apart. Her loveliness, on the other hand, possessed a mesmeric quality which made it impossible for him to be quite indifferent to her charms, and the mere physical attractions of other women paled into insignificance beside hers.

There was one good point, however, which he sought for in vain in the character of Angela Crowe, and that was tenderness. He remembered, with a shudder, once walking with her and seeing a dog run over. The poor creature's death agonies had failed to move her, and she had looked up into his face with a callous

smile, merely saying "What a voice the brute has got. . . ." Now, again, her mother was dangerously ill, perhaps at death's door; yet she proposed to dress and go to a ball, without giving a thought to the sufferer she was abandoning. She must, indeed, possess neither conscience nor heart. The thought occurred to him that the mere pleasure of whirling round the room to the strains of soft music locked in his arms was tempting her to forget her duty to her mother, and then he relented, but not for long; the dreadful vision of a selfish woman broke the He did not like to think that she was quite void of pity or feeling, in spite of her letter, which contained no kind words of sorrow for her mother, and having given her fair warning in his answer, he fervently hoped that she would not appear at the ball that night.

When Angela Crowe received Dr. Maartin's note she was crimping her hair, and the shock it gave her made her burn her neck with the hot tongs. "So he doesn't want me to come," she said, with her lips set; "I wonder why!" The true reason never occurred to her. She was on the alert immediately, thinking there must be some hidden meaning in his advice, and thereupon determined, more firmly than ever, to go to Mde. De Solla's.

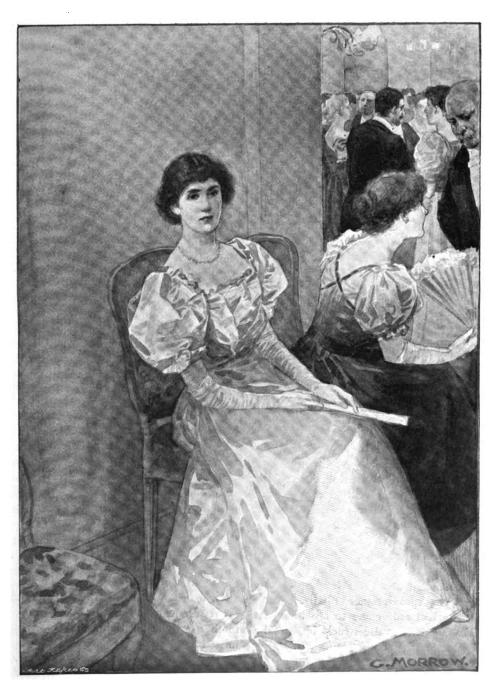
With great precaution and secrecy she laid out her dress, flowers, and ribbons, having, of course, taken her young sister into her confidence, and then went into her mother's room to see if she wanted anything. The poor lady was much worse. Her breathing, which was heavy and laboured, came in short, spasmodic gasps, and she glanced up into her daughter's face with a piteous look of appeal, as though she were begging for relief in her great agony.

Angela was frightened to see her so ill, but she smoothed the pillows for her and smiled, saying: "Have patience, mother; you'll soon be better." Her one thought was to get away at all costs, and it would never have done for her to betray any emotion at that moment.

Slipping out of the room, the girl put on her amber-coloured satin frock trimmed with scarlet geraniums, and her cloak, then she stole downstairs, passed the consulting-room where her father sat writing, and closed the front door gently after her. So far fortune had favoured her, and the next difficulty was to give a plausible excuse to her hostess for having come alone. Jumping into a cab, she thought the matter over. That was easily done. Her mother, she would say, rather than disappoint her, had sent her alone, as Mrs. Crowe was not feeling well enough to brave the cold night air.

Angela reached Mde. De Solla's just as the dancing began. She looked eagerly about her, but Dr. Maartin had not yet arrived. She soon found some mutual friends, with whom she sat herself near the entrance door, and there waited anxiously for the doctor's appearance. Time seemed to fly, for the three bespoken dances were over, and he had not yet arrived. A fearful sinking took possession of her, and she began to look miserable. He was not coming, and she had given herself away for nothing. his letter he had so strongly advised her not to go; perhaps, thinking that she had followed his counsel, he did not deem the ball worth attending without her presence to charm it! The burning, aching anger, the disappointment and rage in her heart, were bursting out of bounds; people were beginning to notice the discomfiture betrayed by her hot red cheeks, the fire in her eyes, and her abrupt refusal to dance.

Meanwhile Dr. Maartin had dined quietly at his club, and had strolled round to Mde. De Solla's, arriving there about eleven o'clock. He had met a friend in the hall, and the two men stood smoking and chatting for a few moments ere they went upstairs. On entering the ball-room Dr. Maartin saw Angela, her eyes straining



A fearful sinking took possession of her.

to catch sight of him and set in a woebegone countenance, which was almost comic to behold. He could hardly believe his own eyes, and after speaking a few casual words to Mde. De Solla, he went up to her.

"And so you came in spite of my letter?" he said gravely, seating himself beside her. Angela broke into a smile.

"Yes," she faltered; "mother seemed better, and I wanted very much to come."

"I am glad she is so much better; that is indeed good news," he continued. "Have you been dancing?" He looked at her as he spoke and noted her flushed, disappointed face, upon which a smile had appeared awkwardly. It had failed, however, to hide the vexation that possessed her.

"Dancing?" she repeated miserably. "Of course not. I was engaged to you for the first three, but you were not here to claim them."

"I did not expect you would be here under the circumstances," replied the doctor, rather drily; "your place was at your mother's side."

"I know," she agreed quickly, "but I did not want to disappoint you," looking deeply into his eyes for a word of thanks. But none came.

"I am afraid you have disappointed me, Angela." It was the first time he had called her by her Christian name, and yet it sounded strangely formal.

"I am sorry," she answered stiffly.

"So am I," said he, and then there was a pause.

A moment later Fred Maartin was sorry for having spoken rather brutally, for after all she had only come to see him. At that moment a valse struck up, and he tried to make amends.

"Give me this one, and forgive me for being late," he said. In another moment Angela was in his arms, her beautiful body was gliding round the room, calling forth the admiration of all onlookers, while she, abandoning herself to the joy of dancing with the man she intensely cared 1 or, forgot all else, save the pleasurable experience of the moment.

"You dance like an angel!" he murmured presently, as they sat down in the conservatory behind a wealth of palms. He took her fan, opened it, and began fanning her.

"Our steps suit exactly, don't they?" she said, looking pleased at the compliment; "but yet I don't believe you really care to dance with me, or you would have been here earlier."

"Yes, I do," he answered, ignoring the latter part of her remark, "and I like you very much too." He bent over her as he spoke, and kissed her neck lightly behind the fan. Angela was surprised, but not angry. She made a pretence of being shocked, however, and suddenly put up her hand. It came in contact with the fan, and broke it.

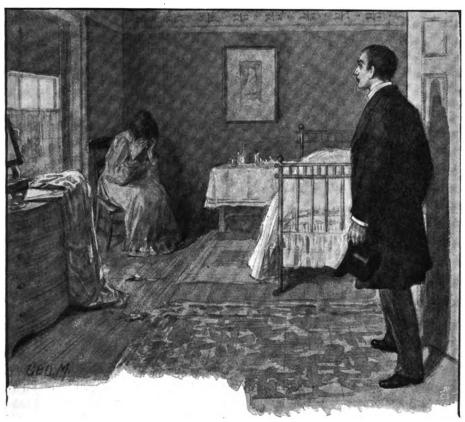
"He will surely propose now," she thought, while she waited for the desired words to be uttered. But he did nothing of the sort, and only pressed her hand, feeling and looking very sheepish.

He was sorry about the fan, too, but still sorrier for having kissed her. It was a decided mistake, he thought grimly. Presently she jumped up and asked him the time. "I must rush," she said, while an anxious feeling overcame her. She had forgotten her mother for the time being, and did not look forward with any degree of pleasure to the reception awaiting her on her return.

"Will you please see me to a cab?" she asked, after they had bade good-bye to their hostess, and had hurriedly partaken of refreshment downstairs. "I hope mother will be all right, and has not missed me," she added.

"I hope so, I'm sure," said Fred. Maartin, with sincerity in his eyes, "and I also trust you will forgive me for what happened just now."

"There is nothing to forgive," she replied earnestly, but still she lingered,



Stiently he gazed at the whole scene.

still she waited to hear if he had anything to say. Dr. Maartin lifted Angela into a cab, and paid the driver his fare. Then he held out his hand, and said: "May I come to enquire to-morrow? Remember that if I can be of any assistance to your father he may command me."

"A demain, then," she called out as the cab drove off, and she leant back, drawing her wraps around her, and feeling disappointed and dissatisfied.

Fred Maartin went to his club and carefully thought over the events of the evening. He felt he had behaved shabbily to the girl, and was ashamed of himself. He would go the next morning and enquire about Mrs. Crowe, and ask Angela to forgive him. He had undoubtedly insulted her by kissing her in the conservatory, and there was only one honour-

able thing to do now, and that was to propose to her. He had acted foolishly, on the impulse of the moment; but such actions are always followed by serious consequences. After all, she was very handsome, evidently very fond of him; he had really never admired her more than he did that night, and—well, he would marry her.

When Angela reached home her father was waiting for her in the study. Disgust for her heartless conduct was depicted vividly on his countenance. "How dared you go out?" was all he could find to say. He lifted his hand to strike her, but she had escaped, and was hurrying upstairs as quickly as her legs could carry her. On the landing Ruth, her younger sister, stood, crying bitterly. "Poor mother has been asking for you,"

she said brokenly, "and when Mary told her you had gone out, it seemed as if it had given her her death-blow."

Angela rushed into her mother's room. Mrs. Crowe was half-sitting, half-lying in bed with a strange change upon her face, betokening that the end was very near. Angela threw off her cloak, and stood by the bed in her ball-dress, clasping her mother's hand. The white, suffering face assumed an expression of horror, with eyes dilated and lips of ashen grey, when she realised the awful truth, and, although she tried to speak, the shadow of death was already creeping upon the delicate face.

Angela threw herself on her knees beside the bed, and cried, "Mother! speak to me; forgive me, dear"; but it was too late. The weary day of pain was over, and the sufferer was at last at rest.

An agony of remorse overcame the girl, and she wildly tore off her dress in her mother's room, threw down her fan, flowers, and gloves, and sat shivering, wan with horror, at the foot of the bed, without taking her eyes off the dead woman's face.

The early morning dawned, and, although the other members of the family, mourning and sobbing, moved about in the room, she still remained there, motionless and stunned.

Dr. Maartin was up early the next morning. He hurried over his breakfast, and drove to Mrs. Crowe's house to make the promised enquiry.

The door was opened by a slatternly servant-girl, with her hair in curl-papers and a tear-stained face, who, in reply to his question, merely said: "Miss Angela will see you upstairs, sir."

He was still in ignorance of the fact that a death had taken place in the house that night, until the servant, preceding him, conducted him straight into Mrs. Crowe's room.

Then the full horror of the situation in all its sickening detail came upon him.

Angela was still cowering in the corner of the room, her hair dishevelled, her face swollen by crying, and clad in a faded old pink tea-gown. A sheet had been thrown over the corpse, which he lifted up, and after looking at the face, drew back hastily. On the chest of drawers lay Angela's ball-dress, looking tawdry and crumpled in the early morning sun. There also lay her crushed flowers, her soiled gloves, and her broken fan, just as she had thrown them off the night before. A quick feeling of revulsion overcame the young fellow as he gazed at the dress -ugh! how bilious it looked, and how common the cotton-backed satin appeared by daylight—and then at the fan, which recalled that kiss of the night before. smell of cheap scent, too, pervaded the room, and the squalid untidiness, consisting of cheap finery, bent hair-pins, bits of riband and other woman's paraphernalia, caused his mind, like a calm sea caught by a sudden tempest, to seethe with horrible disgust.

He was possessed with a kind of rage at the recollection of Angela's heartless behaviour on the previous night, and the love which he imagined had been born in his heart a few hours before fled, leaving nought but a chilled apathy, a feeling of contempt which he knew would never change now.

Silently he gazed at the whole scene—the girl, the inanimate object on the bed, and the ball-dress. Then, with an unfathomable expression on his face, he turned slowly and walked downstairs.

Angela rose and followed him, thinking he had gone into the drawing-room to wait for her, but she heard the front door close briskly after him, and yet she waited on the landing for a few moments, listening to his departing footsteps, so as to make sure that she was not mistaken.

Yes, he had gone, and in that brief moment she realised why she had forfeited his love for her for ever.

After all it was only a ball-dress bathed in a flood of sunshine; but yet it had made all the difference in her world!



READ Mr. Benjamin Swift's The Tormentor (T. Fisher Unwin) almost at a sitting, and when the book was closed and I tried to analyse my feeling about it, it seemed to me that I was sitting in a doctor's surgery, pervaded with that searching, mixed smell of antiseptics and ether and chloroform. That impression remains, but there is something else besides.

Jacob Bristol, the tormentor, is a man without scruple, but with no particular inherent tendency to crime. are assured by Mr. Swift that he was one of the most remarkable men of the century, a statement of the truth of which he by no means convinces me. Bristol is a man who is to watch, to be a spectator, to be the holder of other people's secrets; a reader of mind, and a dissector of his own; a creature, in short, of devilish ingenuity and no moral restraints. He becomes joint guardian with Dr. Muster of two orphans, Paul and Jessie Ring. He discovers the doctor's secret-not exactly murder of his wife's first husband, but something very like it. Jessie, therefore, must no longer remain under the doctor's roof, but must live under his, Bristol's, father's, where, of

course, Bristol lives too. He discovers other secrets, always murder for choice, and becomes the tyrant of the evil-doers of the townships of Great Pines and Little He is not in love with Jessie, but it interests him to observe her love for him; he is not in love with Fanny Mossman, who lives next door, but she is an equally interesting subject for observation; he is not exactly a thief, but he lends his wards' money to an impecunious and besotted lord. At last, however, being a monster having human blood in him, he cannot escape from the calling of human instinct. He becomes a seducer, an implicit murderer, and, finally, an actual murderer and suicide at once. . . "As for putting on the whole armour of God, we shall do that, I suppose, when we get to God's Meantime . . . a hornet's nest indeed." And he looked down into consciousness as men look for blackguard life under the sea. "For me," he said, "the Seven Wonders of the World they are the Seven Deadly Sins!" And he proceeds to commit some of them against his will.

There can be no manner of doubt as to the cleverness, at times almost the brilliance, of the book. It has passages of quite unusual beauty, phrases delicately cut, and of fair sound and movement; epigrams a trifle strained but often trueand all this in spite of curious mannerisms and travesties of punctuation. Swift uses the full-stop like a sledge-hammer; he drives it down where a semicolon would have served, and so not infrequently has a sentence without a nominative. But the book is engrossing: it has force; it has character. At the same time it is eminently unpleasant, and, although the study of strychnine-poisoning in it may be perfectly true, it is incredibly loathsome. Without discussing the moral tendency of The Tormentor, it is an unwholesome book. Mr. Swift has great gifts, but they need guidance and control. He has not yet, as it were, found his feet; when he has I shall look for something less lurid, more human, with more of the joy of life divorced from crime.

From the same publisher Twelve Bad comes the second edition Women. of Lives of Twelve Women, biographies extremely fascinating in their way, and as well written, for their purpose, as they could well be. What a deplorable lot they are, these twelve creatures for whom one set of commandments was not enough to break! Alice Perrers, mistress of the third Edward, and, of course, unfaithful, one of the most avaricious women who ever wore gems; Alice Arden, who added murder to her other vices; Mary Frith, the true Moll Cutpurse, queen of pickpockets; Lady Frances Howard, whose marriage with the Earl of Essex was the only decent episode in her career, and for that she was not responsible; Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, of whom the candid biographer writes: "She deserves to be placed very near the worst of the bad women of history "-so the list runs on. The sidelights thrown upon our own history by a dispassionate survey of these infamous careers are instructive, if not particularly The wonder is that we enlivening.

have emerged in so reputable a condition. A perusal of these pages strengthens one's belief that for sheer, unmitigated wickedness, untouched by intellect or imagination, the bad woman is infinitely worse than the bad man. Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke's traffic in army commissions, and that as late as 1808, would be funny if it were not so contemptible. The then Duke of York had many calls upon his purse in addition to Mrs. Clarke, and the cost of her establishment had to be provided for somehow!

I cannot see that any useful purpose is served by the inclusion of a detailed history of the devilish cruelties and abominations of the fiend, Elizabeth Brownrigg. There are some things better left alone; the story of Brownrigg is surely one of them.

To turn to pleasanter, but A Village still not cheerful matter-Weeping Ferry (Longmans) by Mrs. Margaret L. Woods. The title story is another "village tragedy," but it is hardly so convincing as that earlier one by which Mrs. Woods made her reputation. Young fellows with no particular distraction will, to use a hateful phrase, fall in love with girls beneath them, and the girls, being particularly human in that open-air life, will respond with natural ardour. As a rule, too, the man either behaves very badly indeed, or wriggles out of his entanglement by means more creditable to his head than to his heart. In Weeping Ferry we are told the old story: the beautiful girl, the squire's son, disillusion on the man's side, despair and death on the girl's. So far the whole thing is so familiar as to have come within the range of many a reader's knowledge, except that, as a rule, the girl does not die at all; but there are other matters. here. The old witch-like woman Catherine, who sells Bessie a cure for love, a cure which means death by poisoning, is, in herself, well conceived and treated, but Mrs. Woods does not convince me that so acute a person would have run the terrific risk for a matter of five shillings; true, it was offered in a single coin, and Catherine had never seen a crown-piece before; but she had not always been so innoIn manner and treatment the book is admirable, full of close observation both of men and nature. Here is a descriptive passage perfectly true and direct:—

"One night there was a strong wind;



The Duchess of Cleveland (Barbara Villiers).

(From "Twelve Bad Women," by permission of Mr. Fisher Unwin.)

cent of experience, and her suggested past would surely have cast a deterring shadow across that piece of deadly traffic. Indeed, and in a word, Mrs. Woods paints with too black a brush, the converging lines are too obvious, the net is spread too clearly in the reader's sight.

a wind that beat the heavy-headed trees this way and that, shattering their twigs and sending a host of prematurely fallen leaves scurrying over the meadows and along the white country roads. The earth beneath seemed full of the tumultuous motion of things and their shadows, but in the sky above the moon rode serenely, watched by a far-off circle of palely twinkling stars."

How good the first clause of the last sentence is!

Of the remaining stories in the volume I like An Episode best; indeed, I prefer it to Weeping Ferry; it seems to me more essentially true and with less of gloom for gloom's sake. The figures of the old book-collector, with his dignity and false quantities, and the poor starved scholar who has come down in the world after being educated at Rugby are both presented with dignity and pathos, and the conclusion is not strained. Prison Bars, to be candid, I do not like at all, and Miss Bright-eyes and Mr. Queer, which begins rather well, ends rather In a second edition, which will doubtless soon be required, I hope Mrs. Woods will correct her misquotation of Wordsworth on page 24; even if her version be an alternative reading, it is an incredibly bad one.

It is not, as a rule, particu-Dickenslarly wise or kind to rumiana. mage in old magazines, newspaper files, or other literary rubbish-heaps for the leavings and lendings which a writer, in his own life, did not choose to rescue himself. But this can hardly be said of To be Read at Dusk (George Redway), a volume containing over forty stories, sketches, and essays by Charles Dickens, hitherto not reprinted in England. There is nothing of any great value, but at the same time there is little that has not some interest, illustrative either of Dickens's kindliness, his deep concern for honest reform, or his readiness to fight, head down, against abuses. It must be admitted that he was a somewhat intemperate advocate, and that in such an article as Sir Walter Scott and his Publishers, although he was perfectly right in defending Scott's name, he might have done it at a little less expenditure of invective against the Ballantynes. It must be

admitted, also, that when he wrote about art, which, fortunately, he did very seldom, it was with no great appreciation either of execution or of tendencies. I quote from Old Lamps for New Ones, published in 1850:—

"You come, in this Royal Academy to the contem-Exhibition plation of a Holy Family. You will have the goodness to discharge from your minds all Post-Raphael ideas, all religious aspirations, all elevating thoughts; all tender, awful, sorrowful, ennobling, sacred, graceful, or beautiful associations; and to prepare yourselves, as befits such a subject— Pre-Raphaelly considered—for the lowest depths of what is mean, odious, repulsive, and revolting. . . . Wherever it is possible to express ugliness of feature, limb, or attitude, you have it expressed. Such men as the carpenters might be undressed in any hospital where dirty drunkards, in a high state of varicose veins, are received. Their very toes have walked out of St. Giles's."

All of which is very amusing, but is it true, and what has Mr. Ruskin to say about it?

I quote again from A December Vision, of the same year, a passage eminently characteristic of his manner in another mood, a mood more familiar to most readers:—

"I saw a mighty Spirit, traversing the world without any rest or pause. It was omnipresent, it was all-powerful, it had no compunction, no pity, no relenting sense that any appeal from any of the race of men could reach. It was invisible to every creature born upon the earth, save once to each. It turned its shaded face on whatsoever living thing one time; and straight the end of that living thing was come. It passed through the forest, and the vigorous tree it looked on shrunk away; through the garden, and the leaves perished and the flowers withered; through the air, and the eagles flagged upon the wing and dropped; through the sea, and the monsters of the deep floated, great wrecks, upon the waters. It met the eyes of lions in their lairs, and they were dust; its shadow darkened the faces of young children lying asleep, and they awoke no more."

This is pure Dickens. For the rest, every page is stamped with the man's honesty and conviction, humour and strength; the weaknesses, also, are not absent, but it were ungenerous in the receiver to pick out flaws in the cup which offers him so free a draught.

Almost at the same moment as the volume just dealt with I received George Gissing's Charles Dickens: A critical study (Blackie & Son). No one of whom I can think is so well qualified as Mr. Gissing to deal with Dickens simply on his merits; he, himself, largely uses the same material as "the master," but to very different purposes and moulded by a different art. Mr. Gissing comes to his task with knowledge, clearness of vision, and that kind of appreciation so necessary to a just estimate of Dickens, an appreciation which is not blind, in the smallest degree, to glaring faults, but beyond them all sees and loves the true greatness, the honesty, the tenderness, the manful sincerity, and genius of his subject.

Some critics, I believe, have objected to Mr. Gissing's arrangement of his book into chapters dealing separately with his author's various characteristics; it has been suggested that an analysis of each novel, noting its indication of growth or declension, would have served his purpose better. With such a view I cannot at all agree; a moment's serious reflection will serve to show that such a plan would have been confusing, tedious, and practically impossible. The method adopted by Mr. Gissing seems to me obviously the best, and the result is certainly as luminous and sound a piece of criticism as it has fallen to my lot to read during late years. How admirable a

summary this is of Dickens's vast "gallery of foolish, ridiculous, or offensive women":

"The real business of their lives is to make all about them as uncomfortable as they can. Invariably, they are unintelligent and untaught; very often they are flagrantly imbecile. Their very virtues (if such persons can be said to have any) become a scourge. In the highways and byways of life, by the fireside and in the bed-chamber, their voices shrill upon the terrified ear. It is difficult to believe that death can stifle them; one imagines them upon the threshold of some other world, sounding confusion among unhappy spirits who hoped to have found peace.

"There needs no historical investigation to ascertain the truthfulness of these presentments. Among the poorer folk, especially in London, such women may be observed to-day by any enquirer sufficiently courageous; they are a multitude that no man can number; every other house in the cheap suburbs will be found to contain at least one specimen—veryoften two, for the advantage of quarrelling when men are not at hand. Education has done little as yet to improve the tempers and intellects of women in this rank. "

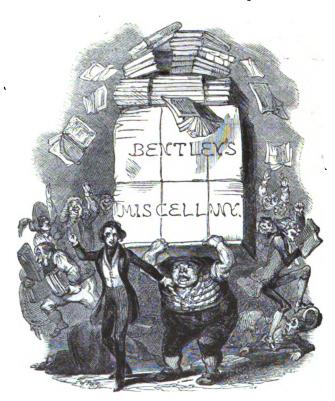
Mr. Gissing speaks here both as critic and observer; he knows that lower middle class almost as well as Dickens knew it himself.

Charles Dickens the man hardly comes within the scope of Mr. Gissing's essay; it is a truthful and loving study of Charles Dickens the writer, the most popular English writer who ever held a pen—with all his faults of construction, his exaggeration, his lurid melodrama—still one of the greatest. I find myself in agreement with Mr. Gissing practically on every point save in his estimate of The Tale of Two Cities; to me that book must always rank second in my liking, and there are moods in which I am inclined to put it first.

I have not space to consider this admirable study further. To those who still love Dickens it will come as a strengthener of affection, to those whose allegiance has failed or flagged, it should serve as an incentive to reconsideration, and to all it cannot fail to appeal as a piece of clear and conscientious work.

We have had novels enough and to spare concerned with the blood and fury of the French Revolution, but few that faithfully record the influence or reflection of that great upheaval upon rural France. It was to rural France, of course, that freedom mainly came, a gift wrapped, indeed, in a bloody napkin, but of great price and abiding good. It is to these quieter aspects of the Revolution that A

Storm-rent Sky, by M. Betham-Edwards (Hurst & Blackett) is devoted. story takes us to a village in the Champagne country, and to Arcis, the native town of Danton; and we follow the career of that extraordinary man, but nearly always through village eyes, until his fall under the appalling influence of the terrible Robespierre. The narrative developes soberly, strongly, and consistently; the style, as we have long learnt to expect from this author, is clear and wellbalanced; the total result, a book of curious charm-not faultless, but of rare restraint and knowledge. After the perusal of many books such as fall to the reviewer's lot-books hurried, fevered, and incomplete - such a narrative as this comes as a positive mental relief.



Frontispiece to "To be read at Dusk."
(By permission of Mr. George Redway.)

THE FOLLY OF ALBERTINA.

BY ANDREW MERRY.

ILLUSTRATED BY IOSEPH SKELTON.

"And we'll call him——?"
"You shall choose, my darling."
Reginald Neville slipped his arm round his wife's waist and drew her sleek head down on to his shoulder.

"He shall be named exactly as you wish, darling," he repeated, kissing her.

"Dear old Reggie!" Mrs. Neville replied, warmly returning his caress. "How good you always are to me! Of course you know the name I shall choose?"

"Indeed I don't."

"Oh, Reggie, you must know! Make a guess!"

"Well, let me think. Oh! 'Victor' because of the Jubilee?"

"Certainly not. I should not be so cruel as to brand him with the year of his birth like that."

"It might come a little hard later on." Reginald Neville smiled at his own thoughts.

"Don't be so silly, Reggie dear," his wife gave him an impatient little shake. "You great big stupid. Of course he shall be called Reginald, after his dear, dear daddy."

This decision found so much favour in her husband's eyes that all conversation—of a rational description—became suspended for a time, and disjointed exclamations, such as "My own little sweetheart, Molly," "Did the silly old bear think," &c., &c., interspersed with yet more inarticulate sounds, came from the two apparently responsible beings on the sofa.

Mrs. Neville was the first to return to sanity.

"There, darling," she remarked.

"There, I'll give you one more kiss, and then I really must go. I've got to order dinner and look over the household books, and give out the stores, and—oh, a dozen or more things before I go up to the workhouse. You know it's my day to go there under the Brabazon scheme, and I do not want to miss it. Besides, I must take my time walking down the hill, I can't get along very fast now." She blushed so charmingly that her husband felt called upon to take "just one more."

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, looking up at the clock. "I must be off. The carriage is at the door, no doubt. Look here, Molly, I'm going straight down to the hospital, and shall be there for at least three hours, so I'll send Smith back to drive you to the workhouse, and if you are not too long you can keep the carriage to bring you home again."

"Thank you so much, dearest," his wife responded, "that will be delightful. I feel wonderfully well to-day, but still——"

"Poor little wife! Never mind, cheer up!" replied Dr. Neville. "Well, my poor patients will think I'm never coming to-day. Mind and don't overdo yourself, Molly." He walked over to the door, and stood still for a moment, turning half-laughing to his wife.

"By the way, Molly," he said slyly, "if it's a girl? What will you call it then?"
"Oh, Reggie!"

Mrs. Neville sat down hurriedly on the sofa, quite overcome by the suggestion.

"I should propose Albertina," her husband continued, breaking into hearty and most unsympathetic peals of laughter, which seemed quite unwarranted by the occasion. "There, don't look so woebegone, ducky, whichever it may be 'twill be welcome."

Mrs. Neville sprang up and waved her hand to her departing lord when he got into his spruce little victoria and drove swiftly away. Then she turned slowly from the window, her mind still busying itself question of a name for the expected little Stranger, and over and over again the pretended "discussion" had ended exactly as it had that morning.

"It won't be a girl. It shan't be a girl!" said Mrs. Neville decisively, smoothing away the pucker her thoughts had brought across her white brow. "And even if it is, what on earth put such a ghastly name



Sat down hurriedly on the sofa.

with the suggestion contained in his laughing words.

"If it's a girl-"

Somehow such a possibility had never come into her calculations. Since the happy winter's day when, like a faint promise of spring, sweet-voiced angels had whispered into her ear the wonderful tidings of a coming Floweret, Mrs. Neville had always thought of the longed-for baby as "He." Over and over again, Reggie and she had discussed the all-important

as Albertina into Reggie's head! Some far-fetched allusion to the Jubilee, I suppose. Well, I must get my work done or I shall not be ready when the carriage comes round again!"

Mary Neville's chief pride in life was to have her house kept in a state as near perfection as was compatible with a more or less limited income, and a habit of "putting by" some of the said income every year.

Even if they did live in a six-roomed

house at the top of a breezy hill, in the heart of a busy manufacturing town, even if her husband was a hard-working, ill-paid provincial doctor, these were no reasons why he and she should not have the little refinements of life and surroundings that their birth and breeding made them accustomed to. But of course it needed a good deal of expenditure of both time and trouble to get and keep her small household up to the mark.

It was three years now since Reginald Neville had robbed the old Sussex rectory of its sweetest blossom, and carried sunnyhaired Molly away with him to brighten up the smoky little midland town. The young doctor's father gave the couple his blessing -hard times and a big family had left the Irish baronet very little else at his disposal! The rector, by much economy, had added a cheque for £,50, to be paid the following Christmas, to his benediction, and with these rather unmarketable securities the doctor and his newly-wedded wife started housekeeping. Yet Reginald never had an hour's anxiety as to his own ultimate success in life being assured. He knew that within him lay potentialities that only needed a field for their development to carry him into the front rank of the profession he adored, and long before his marriage his self-confidence had begun to be realised. Already he was a marked and rising man, and his services and opinions were being sought for far and He was one of the physicians at the big General Hospital, where crowds of the poorer class profited by his skill. his days the out-patients' department was crowded to suffocation, and the sick and suffering from outlying districts in the country round flocked in to consult him, for his kindly, courteous manners made him an universal favourite, whilst his keen, clean-shaven, clever face and piercing grey eyes inspired confidence in the sufferer's breast.

"Young Neville is a man who will make his name heard of all over the world" was the verdict of the older men of his profession, and "young Neville's" wife was not the one who would impede his triumphant progress. Rather would she help forward her husband's interests in every way that lay within her power—most of all by making his home a haven of love, comfort, and repose, where his tired brain could find the rest, relaxation, and freedom from worries absolutely essential to any successful outside work.

From the little brass plate on the area railing bearing the words

"REGINALD NEVILLE, M.D.,"

to the topmost garret in their house Molly had everything spick and span and spotlessly clean. All the arrangements were in good taste and bore the *cachet* of a cultured, educated woman's hand.

When Mrs. Neville had finished interviewing her cook and had, with infinite care, composed a menu for the evening dinner, in which economy and necessary pandering to an epicure's taste were successfully dovetailed, she proceeded to her own room and put on her outdoor clothes.

As the carriage had not yet returned for her, Molly could not resist peeping into the little empty nursery, where her loving hands had prepared a downy nest for the promised little one. She touched each tiny garment with lingering tenderness, and shook out the pretty white curtains of the unused cradle, then tying them back behind big bows of sky-blue riband.

Mrs. Neville's face was radiant, and her eyes shone like twin stars, when she walked down the stairs and counted over the packages her little maid was arranging on the hall table ready to put into the carriage when it returned for her mistress, who would carry them all down to the gloomy workhouse.

"Tea in this parcel, tobacco in that for the old men. A bag of bull's-eyes here for the imbecile old women—how they do love them!" mused Mrs. Neville. "Two big bundles of newspapers, a fine parcel of toys, and, last of all, the needlework and wool for knitting. That's all right, Ellen. Put them all into the hood of the victoria when it comes back, and let me know at once. You'll find me in the study; I may as well arrange the master's table while I am waiting."

The doctor's study, looking out at the back of the house, was a small well-lighted room. It contained a sofa, two armchairs, a well-filled bookcase, and a kneehole table littered inches deep with papers.

"Dear, dear! What a man Reggie is to accumulate rubbish," sighed Molly, seating herself in her husband's chair, and beginning to sort the miscellaneous collection of letters, advertisements, and circulars. It was one of her weekly duties, no one else being permitted to touch this sacred writing-table.

For several minutes there was a sound of tearing papers, Mrs. Neville, with energetic fingers, mutilating the numberless prospectuses.

"Do the people who send out these things imagine we are all fools?" she thought, viciously rending a highly ornate description of the profits to be obtained by taking shares in "The El Dorado Company for extracting Gold Ore from disused Australian Meat Tins." passed on to another paper. "No need of your kind offices, 'You'll be happy to lend on the security of a note of hand, I dare say you will, but we &c., &c.' know your little ways too well. What's Oh, a letter about some new medi-I must keep that for him," and she added it carefully to one of the neat heaps into which she was dividing the letters of importance.

Suddenly Mrs. Neville's whole frame seemed to stiffen with fear or horror; her rosy cheeks faded into ghastly pallor, and her erstwhile happy eyes gazed with dilated pupils at a letter she had come upon amongst her husband's correspondence.

It was written on a highly scented piece of thick pink paper, decorated at the top with a flight of swallows and a wreath of forget-me-nots, rather a vulgar specimen of the now common correspondence cards, one of the style sold with an envelope to match for a penny or three-halfpence.

The writing covering the card—indeed, crossing and re-crossing in parts—was in a fine, rather cramped Italian hand, unmistakably a woman's. All doubt on *that* point, however, was ended when Molly hurriedly searched for and found the signature—there it was:

"And now, dear love, I must bring my letter to a close, signing myself, with many kisses,

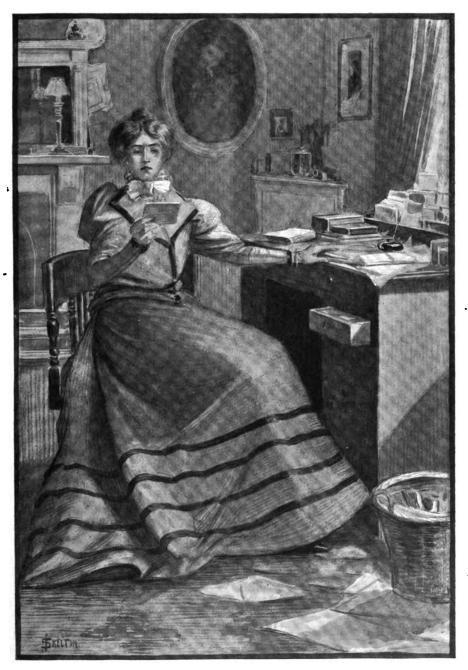
"Your ever devoted "ALBERTINA."

It was monstrous! The blood surged back into Molly's cheeks, dyeing them a deep shamed crimson. "With many kisses." How dared she? His "ever devoted"! Oh, how could Reggie be so cruel, so wicked! This then was why he had suggested that hideous name! "Albertina!" Who was "Albertina"?

There seemed to be no clue to the mystery in the letter; Molly turned the card every way, but it was without date or address. She read it through, her indignation almost getting the better of her as she digested the contents. It began:

"Reginald—my own soul! Since those happy, happy hours we spent together, your loved image has ever been before me. What joy have they who, like your Albertina, know that their fond love is reciprocated by its object!"

At this point Molly broke down, and fairly howled for several minutes. She choked down her sobs with difficulty and faced the ugly truth. Albertina's love was reciprocated by the "object," and the "object" was Reginald. "Albertina" and the "object" had spent "happy, happy"



Mrs. Neville snorted angrily.

hours together. Oh, it was too unbearable! She read on:

"Would that my pen were that of a Macaulay or a Scott, for then I could better describe the poignant sensations with which my virgin mind is filled when you are beside me."

Mrs. Neville snorted angrily and muttered, "I dare say, indeed!"

"Why then are we to be separated? Let us fly hand in hand to some fardistant clime, where, beneath a cloudless sky, we can together discourse the sweet nothings so dear to all lovers' hearts.

"Come to me soon again, my Reginald, never to leave me more, and now, dear love, I must bring my letter to a close, signing myself, with many kisses,

"Your ever devoted,

"ALBERTINA."

Molly never knew if she fainted or not; her next conscious remembrance was the maid coming into the study to tell her that the carriage was at the door.

"Oh, ma'am, you do look so white. Let me get you a glass of wine," said the girl, frightened by her mistress' distraught air.

"Yes, fetch me some sherry," whispered Molly, her one anxiety being to get the girl out of the room, and so have an opportunity to hide the fatal letter unseen.

When the servant returned with the wine Mrs. Neville was more composed.

She drank the sherry, and, despite the little maid's feebly uttered remonstrances, insisted on going, as she had originally intended, to the workhouse.

The cool air fanning her face as the carriage drove along helped further to revive her, and more consecutive thought became possible. The vulgar little loveletter lay hidden in her pocket, and her mind was busy with plans of how best she could cloak this skeleton in her cupboard from the curious eyes of the general public. Like all well-bred people, Molly hated scenes and abhorred scandal, and

she resolved, if possible, to leave her husband without awakening the suspicions of her friends and neighbours.

Of course she must leave Reginald at once, to-morrow at latest! A lump rose in her throat, but she braced herself with the remembrance of "Albertina."

Reginald would still have "Albertina," and she, Molly, would—oh, she would die quietly at home! They would welcome her there—at the rectory—and perhaps when she lay dying—in the best bedroom, with her hair carefully arranged out over the pillow—Reginald would come to bid her farewell. Then she would tell him in a faint voice that she forgave him all, and then, then, he'd be sorry about "Albertina."

This mental picture was so harrowing that poor Molly had great difficulty in suppressing a fresh outburst of tears.

The victoria was nearing the work-house now, so she must take courage and, forgetting her own woes for an hour, strive to lighten a little the heavy burdens of the poor souls imprisoned within its grey walls, and try to bring a little sunshine into their dull lives.

The matron noticed that Mrs. Neville, who was usually so cheerful and high-spirited, seemed wonderfully quiet and subdued that day, and the good woman's motherly heart went out to the forlorn little lady going so conscientiously through the allotted round, distributing the various little luxuries to the poor old paupers, handing out the picture papers and overlooking the needlework, with lack-lustre eyes that were continually filling with tears.

"Poor little soul!" murmured the matron, a meaning smile playing round her ample cheeks and double chin. "She'll get back her pretty colour and little playful ways once it's all over," and with a view to distracting Mrs. Neville's thoughts from what she imagined was weighing on that lady's mind, she proposed her coming with her on the official forenoon tour of

inspection—to which proposition Molly apathetically agreed.

The matron's well-meant suggestion did seem to act as a tonic upon Mrs. Neville, for, long before the round of the wards was completed, Molly had forgotten for the time being her own grief in realising the more tangible sorrows around her.

The Nursery Ward, with its countless babies, stirred her heart to its depths; the tiny inmates of those bare undraped cradles covered with the unlovely checked "workhouse pattern" quilts, Molly could have kissed and cuddled every one when she compared the welcome awaiting them in this world with the welcome prepared for the Angel's promised gift in her own home. Then the imbecile old women appealed most strongly to her sympathies. White-haired, unhonoured, and uncared for, the hard struggle of life had left them stranded and witless, thrown upon the parish, dependent on the tender mercies of strangers, when their very helplessness most needed filial love and care.

"Poor old souls! Yes, it does seem hard on them, Mrs. Neville, don't it?" agreed the matron. "There ain't hardly one of them here but doesn't fancy she'll be fetched away by her children or grandchildren some day. That old lady near the fire, she's buried every chick and child belonging to her years ago, yet she tells me every day, when I go through, that 'her Tom's a-coming to take her home to-morrow."

"Do you ever have lunatics here?" enquired Mrs. Neville, when they left the ward.

"Not really dangerous ones," replied the matron. "If they come in the Guardians pass them on to the asylums, but silly like and childish we've generally a ward full. I won't take you there to-day," the matron added; "'tain't a pretty sight at any time, and certainly not fit for you, my dear young lady—just now. But I'll show you our padded-room, if you like. Praps you've never seen one, but no

doubt you've heard tell and read of them, haven't you? I must go myself, there's a poor patient in it now. No, nothing dangerous, Mrs. Neville-a poor little mite of an old woman the police brought in yesterday. Quite the lady, too, poor thing; was a governess all her life until her wits began to go. She hadn't had bite nor scrap for days when the relieving officer found her, and they hadn't no place to send her to, so brought her up here. We've put her in the padded-room because she don't seem able to stop falling about, and it is a wonder she hasn't done herself a mischief. The nurses tell me she's quite quiet, only talking a lot of gibberish about love, and keeps writing silly love-letters on every scrap o' paper she can find. She must be well over sixty, so fancy such talk at her age! Here we are." She paused by a thicklypadded door, and added in a whisper, "Would you like to look at her, Mrs. Neville, through this observation window?"

Molly put her face to the little square opening the matron disclosed in the door, and looked into the room. Walls. floor, and door, all were thickly padded, a skylight in the centre of the ceiling gave what light was needed. Seated on a sofa or low couch was a laughable little object -a very small, oldish woman, clad in a long, shapeless dressing-gown. Her face was pinched and thin, her faded and colourless hair hung in ridiculous little ringlets round her hollow cheeks. was quite bald on the crown of her head. and it was evident from the indrawn lips that she had lost most of her teeth. Altogether, Molly thought she had never seen so pathetically funny a figure before in all her life.

"May we not go into the room and speak to the poor little creature?" she whispered to the matron. "What's her name?"

The matron pulled out her note-book and read. "Oh, here—'In padded-



"We'll call her 'Albertina.'"

room, single woman, refuses to give her age, apparently between 50 and 60. Her name—is——' I can't quite make it out. 'Her name is—Albertina Tombs.'"

Mrs. Neville turned round sharply. "What name did you say, matron? Albertina?"

"Yes, Albertina. It's a funny name, isn't it? Probably she was born the year of the Queen's marriage to Prince Albert. I believe a lot of babies got Royal names then. Just wait here, Mrs. Neville, and I'll get the nurse in charge of the case to be with you if you want to talk to the poor little woman. Meanwhile I must leave you for a few moments and go round the Idiots' Ward."

Molly's heart beat quickly; like lightning the thought had come to her, could this be the explanation of the fatal letter? She looked again through the little window. The inmate of the padded-room, all unconscious of observation, continued her employment—that of scribbling with a tiny end of pencil on some torn scraps of paper. One letter seemed completed, for she folded the paper together and stood up.

"There," she cried in a high, mincing, falsetto voice, "there, that's done! Now my love, my darling Reginald"—Molly literally jumped,—"you'll soon get my letters and come to my rescue. Now to address it. Dr. Reginald Neville, The General Hospital."

Mrs. Neville turned a crimson, happy face to greet the nurse when she appeared. The woman was a stranger to her, Molly never remembered having seen her before.

"Matron tells me you'd like to speak to the patient Tombs," she said civilly. "It's quite safe to go into the room. The

poor old thing is perfectly harmless. We only put her in here because she kept hurting herself, and it was well-nigh impossible to keep her in bed. Up she was every minute to post letters, did not mind where she'd put them, you know, into cracks in the boards, other patients' beds, or just anywhere. All written to a doctor in the town whom she used to consult at the hospital before she got so bad. A very nice gentleman he is too, by all accounts, and seems to have been very kind to this poor soul, giving her money for food with her medicine. His goodness has got fixed on her brain, and I firmly believe she thinks herself young, most beautiful, and in love with him. Would you like to go in, ma'am?" She produced the key of the door from a bunch at her side.

Mrs. Neville shook her head. Tears had gathered in her eyes, but deep, unspeakable relief filled her heart.

"Not to-day, nurse, thank you," she whispered. "I'll not go in to-day. I'm not feeling very well; will you help me to my carriage?"

That evening a heavy thunderstorm broke over the midland town, and borne on the wings of the whistling wind two angels hovered above the doctor's little house.

One was the sweet-voiced Angel of Life, who had whispered the happy promise into Molly's ear the winter before; the other was the Angel of Death, for these two angels are never very far from each other.

And when the Birth Spirit fulfilled his promise, laying a tiny blossom of life on Molly's breast, the Death Angel flew a little space into the darkness brooding over the deserted street, and in very pity he stole through the long silent corridors of the sleeping workhouse to the door of the padded-room.

"You've come for me at last, my love." The mad woman's cracked voice rang out clearly in the darkness, which had become as light to her, and she shook her ridiculous little ringlets, with a happy sigh lifting her indrawn lips to meet an imaginary kiss before she laid her head down contentedly—to REST.

"And we call our dear little girl—?" asked Reggie next day, kissing the tiny morsel of humanity for the tenth time running.

The scarlet, crumpled baby lay very contentedly nestled in by its young mother, the very latest drop in Reginald Neville's overflowing cup of happiness.

"We'll call her—Albertina," whispered Molly, happy tears chasing each other down her cheeks. Then, in broken whispers, she told him the story of her doubt.







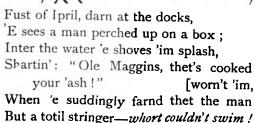




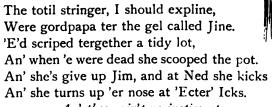
When 'Ecter farnd it were spoof, then 'e Felt as sick as a chap cud be, And 'e said: "Next fust of Ipril hi Will mike 'im know the reasing why." [wire Fur 'e thought as the chap whort sent thet Were a man at the docks called Maggintyre

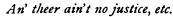
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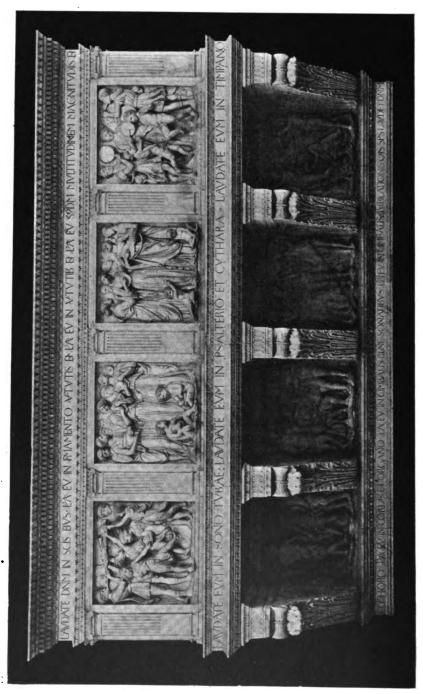


An' theer ain't no justice, etc.









The Organ Loft. By Luca della Robbia,

"Praise the Lord with the sound of Trumpets, with Psalteries, with Harps, and with the Timbrels." "Praise the Lord with Dancing, with Chords and the Organ and with Cymbals."

LUCA DELLA ROBBIA.

AN APPRECIATION.

BY EDWARD HUTTON.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALINARI, FLORENCE.



history, from the sunrise to the middle day, perhaps even to the lowering sun at evening, there would seem to have

been seasons which have had a curious fascination for those who have come after. And to us of this dying century, who have lost so much of the picturesque from life, some of those illuminative days, whose deeds sometimes, whose spirits always live after them, would seem to have a more direct appeal.

The age of the Renaissance in Italy, with its after-glow in France, dying at last in the same soil from which it had sprung, is one of them, one, indeed, which we can hardly study too deeply, hardly give too much thought and patience to the reading of its enigmas.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in which the learning of the ancient world had been rediscovered, in which the graciousness of Plato was a subject of polite conversation, and the Paganism of Greece was beginning to find new half-veiled advocates, produced many strange personalities, much exquisite work, and a history half legend, half truth, which has laid hold of the mind of mankind, and demanded attention so strenuously that we should not be far wrong in naming it as the most fascinating age in history.

Florence, with its dust and heat, and

sweetly shaded valleys, quaint streets and houses, charms you both by its simplicity and by a strange spirit which seems everywhere in its walls and its pictures. The young girl standing in the doorway with a wonderful gracefulness, a negligent arm behind her head, with contour of parted lips and falling eyelids just in the shadow, the sun, as it were, trying to see the glory beneath the veiling lids, the breeze just whispering as a lover to her; surely it is some such imaginary portrait as this that conjures up that Florence for us.

Yet in this latter end, this last decade of our century which is so insane, so self-conscious, and so vulgar, it would be a gain all the greater because of its impossibility to get back to the Florence of the Renaissance and walk with Pico della Mirandola or with Simonetta under the orange trees and see the face, all the soft lines and cunning sadness of the eyes, the wonderful superiority, the exclusiveness of the lines of the body in their own soft earth, where they were once so skilfully moulded, which attract the men of our generation so strangely.

About the year 1400, born neither to poverty nor riches, but enjoying, in an age whose characteristic was that it enjoyed itself, an unwearied frugality, an unending delight in simple things, a child played with the sunbeams who was to come by means of these simple things to some eminence.

His family, we are led to believe, was not undistinguished, and it was after some opposition, and after some patient, but,



"Praise the Lord with Psalteries."
Organ Loft. Panel 2.

we may be sure, dutiful insistence on the part of Luca that old Simone di Marco della Robbia gave the necessary permission, and apprenticed his son to Leonardo di Ser Giovanni, a goldsmith, from whom Luca was to learn, so far as in him lay, how to become an artist. Leonardo seems to have been a hard taskmaster, and certainly to his scholarly pupil, who never forgot a lesson, who all his life assumed the attitude of the scholar towards his teachers, nay, even his contemporaries, old Giovanni must have been

trying indeed. At any rate we find Luca before long in the house of a much more congenial master, one of the greatest sculptors of his day, Lorenzo Ghiberti. From him Luca learned, in that loyal way, —loyalty to his masters being one of his most pronounced characteristics, amounting almost to a gift with him,—to cast in bronze.

His loyalty receives almost touching expression in regard to Giotto, seventy years dead, for he is commissioned to execute panels for Giotto's Campanile,



"Praise the Lord with Dancing."
Organ Loft. Panel 5.

"The Shepherds' Tower," the most glorious tower in the world, and for the time being, he, as it were, becomes the pupil of Giotto. So like the master indeed are these panels, so Giottesque in feeling and execution, that it has been supposed Giotto left drawings for them, but I think, seeing there is nothing to prove any such hypothesis, and knowing Luca's loyalty, it is much more reasonable, more gracious, too, perhaps, to think of him as loyal to the great artist and architect whom he with all Florentines would reverence, even to the extent of

effacing himself, and carrying out that which Giotto was unable to do in the way he believed Giotto would have wished.

Here, in the studio of Ghiberti, who could tell such wonderful stories of the world beyond Florence, of that long ramble he made when a boy, starting suddenly during a fit of romantic longing which in the end lasted so long, Luca must often have met Donatello—Donato Donatello—for love, the other great influence in his life. The strong, the terrible power that sometimes seems almost to descend in Donatello, the realism

if one may use such a word in an age that was happily ignorant of what it has come to mean for us, against the sweet, summer-like sentimentalism, the romance, sometimes perhaps the prettiness of Ghiberti, these are the two influences which must have borne most strongly on the young Luca even in those early days.

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; ye cannot serve God and Mammon." But how if neither were of Mammon; how if both were good, each in its way? Luca, contemplating both, wishing to be loyal to both, hesitated, and in the end chose neither, hesitating to the end of his life.

Now he leans towards Ghiberti, now towards Donatello, but he never chooses either method. He hesitated, and hesitating, curiously enough he found salva-In his great bronze gates for the sacristy in the Cathedral of his beloved Florence, we may almost see the struggle it had come to be for him to choose between those two influences. And surely it is more than a fancied difference, surely there is something of his appreciation of both methods, his love of both masters, that of those four evangelists, St. Matthew and St. Mark are for Donatello, and St. Luke and St. John for the gentler Ghiberti. His supposed earliest works, his lunettes of the Resurrection and the Ascension in the Cathedral, would seem to be more under the influence of Ghiberti than of his great contemporary, and yet in marked degree, in some aspect of expression, he surpasses them both. For not only has Luca the slow, hesitating choice—a choice that is never really made—of the true scholar, as we see in this hesitancy, this wavering which is almost a compromise. but he realises, is, indeed, the first of his time to realise in sculpture, the power of expressing life. What the Greeks had striven, perhaps in vain, to attain, that naturalness in sculpture, as though the figure were really about to breathe and put out its hand, that wonderful vagueness of Michael Angelo, akin to nature, by

which he attained the same life-giving effect, a something more than mere form, something not frozen, an expression of the spirit, in fact, bloomed in Luca's work like a new wild flower. Expression, life, the power to express the spirit in stone, or bronze, or terra-cotta, that is what he really discovered, and not the mere material of his art as Vasari supposes. the first intimation of the Christian idea in sculpture. The whole philosophy of Epicurus, that power or gift of making the most of each moment as it passes, that wonderful eternal moment frozen for ever in Greek sculpture, is gone, and instead we get a wonderful restfulness. The spirit has time to shine forth, and Mary Madonna tells us of the soul, the immortal part of man.

And so Luca, having made this great discovery, hesitates to give himself to either side, is not quite sure, perhaps, which is the right side, and in hesitating he gradually drifts into a kind of compromise which surely suits that message of his of spirit in life, a something beyond mere form, very happily.

For the first forty-five or fifty years of his life he did little, at least, that remains to us, a man full of dreams, and possibly, as Vasari leads us to believe, full of invention to give joy to all people.

In the year 1450 his most perfect work in marble was completed-begun and finished within the year,—the monument to the Bishop of Fiesole, lately dead, Benozzo Federighi by name. In this work, as one might almost expect, there is a hopefulness, almost a cheerfulness, and a profusion of natural things that is truly Luca's very self. Fruits, garlands, grapes, John the Baptist, the Christ and the Virgin, and there the old ecclesiastic whose features express not oblivion, not sleep even, but the very spirit of repose after labour, neither the terror of the grave, not the felicity of some sentimental beatitude, but the spirit of rest.

During those fifty years Luca must have



A Tabernacie at Santa Maria, Peretola.

been far from idle. Searching for new methods of art, new means of expression, he came upon a new medium by which to express his wonderful discovery. That blue and white enamelled terra-cotta, could it have come from anywhere but Italy, can it live anywhere but in Italy? Luca, searching for some humbler material in which to express himself-could it be that he wished perhaps to popularise his work?—comes upon this terra-cotta and chiefly by it, poor, humble earth though it is, is made immortal. Having, as we have seen, in early life made the sacristy doors with their panels for Santa Maria del Fiore, the Cathedral of Florence, he now with his new discovery crowned them, for over them he places two angels in enamelled terra-cotta, placing them, perhaps, where other less enduring things might not dwell, because of the damp, dove sono acave.

Among the first to give Luca commissions for this exquisite work in clay was Piero di Cosimo Medici, master practically of Florence and patron of the For him Luca decorated a small book-lined library in the great Medici palace built by Cosmo de Medici. work was for the ceiling and the pavement, the ceiling being in half circle. For the hot summer days of Italy, when the streets are a blaze of light and the sun seems literally to embrace the loved city, this terra-cotta work of Luca's, with its cool whites and blues, was particularly delightful, bringing veritably a piece, as it were, of the cool moving sea or the deep sky into a place confined and shut in. by some curious "trick" or felicity of workmanship he has contrived to give the whole the appearance of being not in many pieces, but of one only. As though he had given the place a really settled charm, where, in the summer days, scorching and hot, coolness, temperance, might find a safe retreat.

The organ loft by Luca della Robbia, made for the Cathedral, his chiefest work, is often compared to that which now stands

so near, the organ loft by Donatello. In reality, except that they are both organ lofts, one could scarcely think of a more unhappy comparison. Luca as usual with him now sets out to express the abounding spirit. He proposes to illustrate the Psalm CL., "Praise the Lord, praise Him in the sound of the trumpet, praise Him upon the lute and harp. Praise Him in the cymbals and dances, praise Him upon the strings and pipe." For expression this work stands unequalled by any of his contem-For Luca, always happiest, we may suppose, among children, those simple souls who understood the humble dreamer, has here repaid them in full for all their sympathy. He has made youth a thing of beauty, a joy for ever, giving it a substance, an immortality which in the short elusive morning of human reality it lacks. He always succeeded best with children, understanding them, perhaps feeling for them, as though those tender, ungrown little ones were something especially precious to one who all his life had loved best that which was simple. It might almost have been in the mind of Keats when he whispered:-

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard Are sweeter."

The voices sound on our ears, the throats seem verily to throb, and the eyes show unspeakable worship, joy, thanksgiving. The lifting treble, the wood-like alto, the falling tenor, and the rushing bass, all are seen and heard; it is a triumph of the spirit in the expression of a few youths and maidens.

The choice of the humbler way, the search for meekness, did not go unrewarded. His work in terra-cotta gradually became famous throughout Italy, throughout Europe. He is worked to death, so many desiring to possess the work of the artist who had chosen that which was in itself so poor, and elevated it by the very simplicity, the nobleness and sweetness of his genius. It is like the story of Michael Angelo, who

being commanded to model a figure in snow, as though in irony, in a kind of contempt for his genius, by the great Medici, during a snowy winter in the courtyard of the Pitti Palace at Florence, gave to the work, perhaps in irony, too, It was so with Luca, till at last he had too much to do, Italy, Europe, requiring more from him than he could perform. And so he takes to him his brothers Ottaviano and Agostino, and more especially his nephew Andrea, tak-



The Singing Boys. Replaced in the Organ Loft in plaster.

his mightiest powers, and on that melting snow image lavished his choicest genius, thinking, perhaps, that that which was to have so short a life, so momentary an existence, the snow melting even as he moulded it, called at least for as much love as his creations in everlasting marble. ing this last young man into his very heart too, training them in his own new invention, the glorious work in the humble material. And not without success, at least, with Andrea, who seems, perhaps from the fact that Luca did take him into his heart, to have caught at times the very spirit of the master. For in Andrea's



"Praise the Lord with Chords and with the Organ."

Organ Loft. Panel 6.

work we catch an after-glow at least of Luca, and sometimes of Luca at his best.

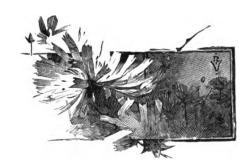
But he is not even yet satisfied; invention, tireless study for some still more perfect mode of self-expression, was a kind of mania with him. And, at last, tired out, he goes to Orleans, to France, to his brother Girolamo, who had succeeded greatly in that country, even, as Vasari says, "acquiring high reputation and great riches." After the labour and heat of the day we may suppose he found rest at last, though but for a little time. Soon after his arrival in France he seems

to fade almost to a shadow, like a flower almost, a flower of his own Italy, transplanted from its native soil. It is a characteristic of his work, it will not bear removal. That white and blue terra-cotta, so delicate, so cooling, fades, too, away from Italy. It is only really satisfactory in its native soil, of which, after all, it is a product. The very earth, the soil of Italy going to form those wonderful Madonnas and happy children.

They take him—all that was left of that loveable, humble artist—back to Italy, to the tomb of his fathers, to bury him.

How could he rest, he who was made of her sky and her sea, away from Italy when at last he comes to lay himself down. It was a characteristic of him that he should always have conceived of death cheerfully. Not as oblivion, nor even as sleep, as we have seen in that great marble tomb he made for the Bishop of Fiesole, but just as a rest, a rest well earned, as though even yet perhaps—who knows?—there might be work for him to do.

And so we see Luca della Robbia, scholar, learner, teaching his own age, and those that come after, the one true lesson we have learned over the Greeks, the use, the power of expressing the spirit. He made it possible for Michael Angelo to sculpture; he discovered a new medium. Not one of the world's greatest artists, he was one of its most loveable of men. One of those human people it must have been good to know. His was a personal genius, a peculiar power; and so, though he had many followers, many pupils, he stands alone, unassailable, not even his nephew Andrea being able to approach him, for his work is the result of a personal genius for expressing the abounding spirit.



THE PIRATES OF THE SOLENT.

THE NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE IN COMPANY WITH THE POET AND THE BOOKMAKER; CONTAINING THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT, AND SOME ACCOUNT OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES; WITH OTHER STRANGE AND IMPROBABLE ADVENTURES: EXTRACTED FROM THE LOG OF THE "FOLLY."

BY ALLEN UPWARD.

ILLUSTRATED BY THOS. DOWNEY.

III.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION
OF THE ISLAND—THE FLAG—A MORTIFYING
INCIDENT—BUOYS—THE TYRANT IN A NEW
LIGHT—A NIGHT AT SEA—SWABBING—
HINTS TO YOUNG SEAMEN—TERRA FIRMA—
UNFRIENDLY RECEPTION BY THE NATIVES.



HE first thing that struck me on discovering the island of which we

had come in search, was its curious resemblance to other islands of the same kind. It appeared to be just an ordinary, common, everyday island, such as you can get anywhere. It is not large; the fuss that has been made over it is out of all proportion to its size. It is about twenty-four miles long by twelve broad, and an active woman can bicycle all round it in a day.

In shape the Isle of Wight is like a flatfish with its mouth open and a notch cut in the middle of its back. Bembridge Harbour is the mouth, and the muddy creek known to the natives as the River Medina is the notch. In the middle of the island there are hills, which slope down towards the edge. If you spread out a pocket-handkerchief on the table and then take hold of the middle and pull it up a bit you get a good rough model of this island. The place is inhabited by Jutes. The natives were formerly called Romans and lived in villas which are now fast falling into decay. The Jutes live in villas, too, which are in a slightly better state of repair. Little Arthur, in his history of England, speaks of these Jutes as a warlike race, and the remark still holds good, though most of them are now on half-pay.

Royalty has always shown a penchant for this island as a residence. The late Charles I. spent many pleasant hours In Carisbrooke Castle they still point out the window by which he attempted to go home one night, no doubt mistaking it for the door in consequence of the lateness of the hour. The story goes that he got his head through the bars, and then found himself unable to go forward or backward, and so had to wait there till his friends came along and sawed him out. I do not myself believe this story. It bears a suspicious resemblance to a venerable tradition which has been handed down for generations, and which professes to account for the insulting and opprobrious epithet sometimes applied to natives of this island, of Isle of Wight calves. That story is that an Isle of Wight labourer, some time in the Middle Ages, came to his master one day to tell him that the calf had stuck its head through a wooden fence, and could not be released. The farmer ordered him to saw it out, an order which the Isle of Wight man literally obeyed by sawing off, not the

paling, but the unfortunate animal's head. Ever since when a foreigner from the mainland of Hampshire wishes to outrage and disgust one of the islanders, he has only to refer to this distressing incident. Now, that Charles I.'s head was taken off, I believe, but not that it occurred at Carisbrooke. The best authorities place the event at Whitehall, and it is not likely that it occurred at both places. Few men have such things happen to them twice.

But I anticipate.

In the first flush of joy at the discovery which I had come so far to make, I ordered a double ration of grog to be served out to all hands. The Tyrant went below with alacrity to execute this order; and I may say here that afterwards during the cruise whenever we wanted to get rid of his presence on deck, in order to execute some nautical manœuvre which we felt a doubt of his approving, we found an allusion to grog a very serviceable weapon. I mention this for the benefit of other yachtsmen who may suffer under similar despotism.

The moment the Tyrant had disappeared, the Poet suggested that the time had arrived for hoisting the flag of the expedition. Out of compliment to the Benchers we had decided to adopt as our ensign the flag which the well-known Middle Temple lamb carries across its This, as every member of the Inn is aware, is a burgee with two tails, displaying a red Saint George's cross on a white ground. A replica of this banner in silk had been manufactured for us by one of the Poet's lady friends, under his directions, and he now proceeded to disinter it from his portmanteau. As soon as it was found, we summoned the Victim, who was the only member of the ship's company left on deck, and with his aid the simple yet striking pennant was quickly run up to the mast-head.

The result exceeded our expectations. Quite a number of passing yachts at

once began dipping their flags to us, which flags, as we perceived, were rather like our own, except that they had only one tail. On those yachts which came near enough we even saw the people rushing for telescopes and turning them eagerly on to our deck.

"They seem to recognise us," observed the Bookmaker, thoughtfully.

The Poet smiled with some complacence.

"Yes," he said, "I suppose it has got



The Tyrant sees our Flag.

about that I am on board. I did not know that my Seaweed Songs were so popular among yachting men."

I could not refrain from a sarcastic laugh. "Idiot! Do you really suppose that any of these people have ever heard of your ridiculous poems?" I demanded. "The attention we are exciting is due to the fact that they have recognised us as the discoverers of the Isle of Wight. Our project has naturally been the chief topic of interest in yachting circles for a considerable time, and these persons, no doubt, have been scanning the horizon for the first sign of our approach."

"I suppose we haven't got hold of some other fellow's racing colours by mistake?" suggested the Bookmaker.

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when the Tyrant's head and shoulders emerged from the forecastle. He came slowly up on to the deck, and took a glance round. The next moment his eye fell on our burgee, and an awful change came over his face, his eyes started from his head, and he reeled, and would have fallen overboard but for clutching the stays.

"What's that'ere?" he gasped, as soon as he could speak. "Excuse me, gentlemen," he added, in a choking voice, "but I'm afraid that little drop of grog was a bit too strong. Would you be so kind as to tell me whether there is anything aflying up at the top of that there mast?"

"Certainly," I answered, with pride. "You see there our burgee, the flag of the expedition."

At this moment the bewildered man caught sight of one of the passing yachts, a fine schooner of two hundred tons, in the act of saluting us. With a hoarse cry he rushed to the signal halliards and began to haul down our flag for dear life.

"What are you doing?" I asked. "Leave the flag alone."

He turned on me with an expression in which rage and pity struggled for the mastery.

"Look 'ere, sir, this ain't no sort of a way to go on. If you gentlemen are going to bide and play games, you can just put me ashore first.

"What do you mean?" I said. "What's the matter? What's wrong with that burgee?"

"Do you mean to say you don't know whose flag you're a-flying of?" he demanded in a tone of hard disbelief.

"I know that it is the lamb's flag," I retorted, "the lamb of the Middle Temple, and as we are all members of that Inn I take it we are as much entitled to carry it as the lamb is."

"I don't know what you're a-talking

of," returned the Tyrant angrily. "I don't know nothing about no lambs nor no inns, unless you mean the Lamb at Gosport. That there flag of yours is the burgee of the Commodore of the Royal Yacht Squadron, and the only person as can fly it in these waters is the Prince of Wales."

It was an annoying incident. We did not so much mind being forbidden to hoist our flag, though why the Commodore of the R.Y.S. should be entitled to the flag that our lamb has been carrying for the last seven hundred years I fail to see. But it was disagreeable to think that all those other yachts, the property, as we now learned, of members of the Squadron, had been merely paying homage to naval rank all the time that we had given them credit for showing respect to scientific enterprise. It was discouraging, but it was not without its moral lesson. As soon as we got to Cowes we changed the device on our flag, at the Bookmaker's instigation, to a red horseshoe. No doubt the Emperor of Germany will come along presently, and pretend that that is his ensign,

No sooner was this matter disposed of than fresh perils began to gather round our devoted heads. The breeze, which had been getting lighter and lighter, dropped altogether as we emerged from Southampton Water, and our gallant craft began to drift helplessly at the mercy of the treacherous tide. There, right opposite us, at the distance of only three or four miles, lay Cowes, but we were being slowly carried past it down the Solent, perhaps to be dashed upon the dreaded Needles, and never heard of more.

It was curious to see how each man's idiosyncrasy asserted itself in the hour of trial. While I was sensibly and prudently jotting down a few brief testamentary dispositions, the Bookmaker began offering to give or take the odds against our ever seeing the dear old Temple again. The Poet, at the same

time, was observed to sink into a reverie, and on being questioned he admitted that he was composing his Swan Song, to be recited at the moment when our helpless bark struck on the rocks.

The Bookmaker and I exchanged looks of dismay at this last piece of intelligence. We were both brave men, and shipwreck and death were, so to speak, all in the day's work. But a Swan Song was just the one thing which we had not bargained for, and we therefore summoned the Tyrant and bade him save our lives.

The Tyrant, who was gradually sinking into a somnolent condition, seemed at first disposed to resent the dropping of the wind as a personal injury done him by us. But after some show of grief and indignation he consented to anchor on the Brambles, a sandbank lying out somewhere in the middle of the Solent. While the sails were being lowered, we heard him grumbling aloud to his assistants:

"We'm get under weigh at five in the morning, you hear?"

We brought up close beside one of those interesting objects which are found scattered so freely over the surface of these waters, and are known as buoys. was long supposed by the vulgar that these buoys, which are extremely small, and difficult to see at any distance, were intended to mark out the channels. Had that been really so, of course they would have been made large and conspicuous, thereby ruining the pilots, a most deserving class of They are in reality the property of the various yacht clubs, and their purpose is to provide yachting men with a pleasurable and exciting form of sport known as "picking up the buoy."

This pastime, which is very much like tent-pegging, is played as follows. You first name your buoy—say, the West Lepe. The Bembridge Ledge Buoy is a favourite with skilled players, but it is too difficult for the beginner, as there are several other buoys near it, which are apt to confuse the eye, and if you go much

inside of the object buoy, you run your boat on to the Ledge, which is equal to a coup at billiards, and counts three against you if you are drowned, and two if you The West Lepe is less dangerous, and affords very fair sport, as it is not easy to find, and may readily be confounded with the East Lepe close to it, both buoys being coloured red and white, and the only difference being that one is shaped like a mustard tin and the other like a cottage loaf. Having selected your buoy, you start out from your moorings, taking the tiller yourself, and sending your skipper below, as it is considered cheating to accept his advice. at your buoy by guess, and if, when you first sight it, your boat is heading straight for it, so that you reach it without altering your course, you have won the game. This is rarely done even by professionals. Failing that, the player must next try how close he can go to the buoy without actually colliding with it, and it is at this point that the game becomes most exciting. as the action of the wind and tide is extremely deceptive, and you may find yourself swept right away to leeward when you think you have the game in hand.

Many yachtsmen consider this sport more interesting than racing, and in fact the finding of the buoys forms one of the elements of uncertainty in racing. By itself, it corresponds to playing agains bogey at golf.

As soon as we were safely anchored we prepared for our first dinner on board. At this meal the Poet, rushing from one extreme to the other, appeared in evening dress, a move which told well with the hands, and gave childish satisfaction to the Tyrant, who at once announced that he should weigh the anchor again at 3 a.m. The repast itself was quite Epicurean, comprising tinned soup, tinned salmon, tinned peas, tinned curry, and The only thing that wasn't tinned beef. tinned was the bread. As we sat down to it I asked, with quiet triumph:

"Well, what do you men think of my catering?"

The Bookmaker cast an uneasy glance round, and looked at the Poet. The Poet followed his example, and turned to me with an ungrateful scowl.

"I am accustomed to take salt with my food," he said, nastily. "Where is the salt?"

I drew back in dismay. Salt was just the one thing that I had overlooked. Inwardly cursing that plausible Yacht Provision man who had so grossly deceived me, I made a gallant attempt to pass the matter off.

"Salt!" I exclaimed, with well-acted

surprise. "You must be joking. All these viands before us are saturated with salt. The very air we are breathing comes to us across the briny sur-



"Where is the salt?"

face of the deep, laden with it. Do you want to be struck down by the ravages of scurvy?" The Poet smiled scornfully, and took a spoonful of soup.

"This soup is not saturated with it," he retorted. "It is beastly. It is saturated with tin, not salt. If this is your idea of yachting, to drag us out here, miles from any hotel, and ask us to eat tinned garbage without salt, no more yachting for me. I wish I had stayed in the Temple. Even the Benchers provide salt for their guests. As it is I shall go ashore, if I have to row there."

While I was writhing under these bitter taunts, barbed as they were by the mute reproachful glances of the Bookmaker, there came a knock at the door of communication between the cabin and the forecastle, and the voice of the Tyrant was heard:

"Have you gentlemen got any salt in there? 'Cause, if not, I'll bring in some of ours."

A glad cry broke from our parched lips. Never did Tyrant become more suddenly popular than that worthy man, whom we had so cruelly misjudged, as he rolled through the doorway with an eggcup filled to the brim with the precious commodity. Filled with remorse, we forgot all his previous harshness, and blessed him unaware. He retired, muttering something about getting under weigh at two o'clock. How true it is that

beneath a rough and forbidding exterior there may lurk a kind and loving heart!

After dinner we sat out on deck and smoked in the moonlight. The

scene was very beautiful, reminding us of the Thames as seen from the Temple Garden at night. In the bows hung our riding-light, which we always showed when at anchor between sunset and sunrise. The Crew informed us that this was the law, and we took his word for it. The hands were turning in below, and we heard the last muffled growl of the Tyrant as he fell into his hammock: "Start one o'clock in morning!"

It was a soothing experience to find ourselves out there upon the water, as lonely as if half the Atlantic stretched between us and the nearest land, far away from the insolence of Benchers and the cold indifference of solicitors, alone with the peaceful night and the unchanging stars. In the offing the lights of Cowes shone softly over the waves, going out one by one as the night drew down, till only the thronging lanterns of the shipping in the roadstead were left signalling to our own solitary lamp across the deep. Here and there in the offing red and green spots of light came stealing swiftly and noiselessly along the tide, marking the passage of some belated steamer. Overhead the thick radiance of the stars showed like the clustered riding-lights of an invisible argosy of the heavens. The warm vaporous moon was setting slowly behind a low headland of the shadowed isle, on which the trees stood out gaunt and black like some solemn grove in the land of the departed.

When I started out to write this book I hired a professional hand to do the serious descriptions and chunks suburban morality in between which are necessary to make a book of this kind take with the public. But, unfortunately, he struck at the last moment on a question of terms, so that I have had to turn to and knock out something myself. The above is about the best I can do. not first-rate, but it is middling, and calculated, in my opinion, to go down in Clapham. I read it to the Bookmaker, and he said it made him feel creepy and uncomfortable, and as if he should like a drink. I expect to improve as I go on.

The Bookmaker himself was softened by the influence of the hour, and ceased at last to speculate on his chance of obtaining a copy of Sporting Life in the morning. The Poet sat apart absorbed in meditation, and every now and then heaved a mournful sigh. It is understood among his friends that the Poet is haunted by secret remorse for having once wrecked the life of a Marchioness whose love he was unable to return. The details of this sad story have never transpired, but whenever the Poet appears

more than usually melancholy and abstracted it is assumed that his thoughts are turning to this high-born but unhappy lady. On this occasion, doubtless, her fair, forlorn image had risen before him to reproach him with the cruel past.

It was the Bookmaker who at last broke the spell by remarking that he was jolly sleepy.

"I tell you what," he went on to say, "let's turn in now, and then in the morning we shall rise as fresh as larks, and have a glorious dip over the side before breakfast."

The suggestion was accepted with cordiality. We were probably deceived in thinking that we heard a hollow voice from the forecastle as we went below, muttering some broken words that sounded like: "Star' twel' o'lock!"

In the morning I was roused by a horrible noise as if a waterspout had descended upon the deck. I opened my eyes, and dimly perceived a sheet of water washing to and fro over the narrow prism of glass let into the roof of my berth to serve as a window. The next moment the water commenced to trickle through a leak not mentioned in the yacht's inventory, and to fall coldly and clammily on the bridge of my nose.

I wriggled to and fro for a minute, vainly trying to get from under this primitive shower bath, and finally dived miserably off my shelf head-foremost on to the floor. As I did so I heard hollow moans coming from the ladies' cabin, which told me that my companions were also rising with the freshness of larks, according to our arrangement.

I have no means of knowing what the feelings of the lark really are, but if the average lark feels at all like the three shivering figures in pyjamas who presently emerged on the deck of the Folly, clutching their towels in blue and trembling fingers, then I can only say that that bird has sounded a depth of wretchedness which I trust is rare among the feathered

race, and his joyous carol is a very finished piece of acting indeed.

The Tyrant, I ought to say, had not quite fulfilled his threats of over-night. It was now nearly eight o'clock, and the anchor had not been disturbed from its oozy bed. What had roused us was not the process of weighing that implement, but the far more fearful proceeding known as swabbing the deck. The whole surface of the *Folly* was streaming with water, in which the Tyrant and his satellites were paddling about ankle-deep, sweep-

ing the torrent this way and that with mops, and apparently revelling in their task.

We got to know afterwards that this is, in fact, the most cherished pursuit of yacht seamen. The average Solent skipper would rather



The glorious dip over the side before breakfast!

you knocked off his grog than restrained him from swabbing the deck. many of these men the thing becomes a mania, and in the winter, if they are on shore, they are said to pay money out of their savings for permission to come into a yachting yard and swab vessels that may be laying up there. There is a story of a seamen's missionary who was trying to reform an old salt, and induce him to take the pledge. He had painted the hereafter of the sinner in colours which left nothing to the imagination, but still the old man held out. It was useless to tell him that he would have no water to drink in the Hold, because the old fellow wouldn't have realised that as any deprivation. It would have meant no change in his habits. So, finally, the missionary played his big hand by pointing out that if there were no water down there, there would be no swabbing. It was a bluff, of course, because a spirit might swab with fire and brimstone out of the lake, but the poor old fellow didn't know this, and it fairly scooped him in. He signed the pledge on the spot, turned over a new leaf, made money in the shrimp and whelk trade, and is now deacon of

a Baptist chapel, which he swabs three times a day with his own hands. I give this anecdote for what it is worth.

While we were taking in the dismal and depressing spectacle on deck we made faint attempts to

keep up each other's spirits.

"Now, then," I said, as encouragingly as I could, "which of you fellows will be in first?"

"Ah, let's toss up for it," replied the Bookmaker, edging a little away from the side of the vessel. "The water looks glorious."

"Yes, g-glorious certainly, but a trifle c-cold, I think," murmured the Poet between his chattering teeth.

"C-cold, n-nonsense; b-b-bracing, you mean," retorted the Bookmaker, who was fast assuming the appearance of an Ancient Briton in his war-paint.

"I suppose before breakfast is

the best time to bathe?" I said, tentatively.

I saw a look of hope come into their eyes.
"I'm not so sure about that," the Poet said quickly.
"Now I come to think of it, I believe the best medical authorities say you should bathe an hour or two after breakfast."

The Bookmaker took another look at the leaden-hued billows as they lapped forbiddingly against the side.

"I don't believe in those something doctors as a rule," he remarked, "but they seem to have got hold of the right tip this time."

We stood for a few seconds longer, pretending to hesitate, and then, averting our eyes from each other like men who do a deed of shame, we softly stole down the ladder again.

This was the first and last time of our rising as fresh as larks to have a glorious dip over the side before breakfast. The effect was to make the Bookmaker unpopular, and for some time after suggestions from him were received with great caution.

Directly after breakfast a light breeze sprang up from the south-west, and we made a leisurely start for Cowes. The Poet, who had now succeeded to the command, was too lazy to steer himself, but ungenerously refused to entrust the helm to my experienced hands.

"No, no, old man," he said, in a tone which many would have considered offensive, "I don't want to spend another night out here. I want to really get to Cowes some time, you know."

The Tyrant accordingly took charge of the tiller, and we settled ourselves comfortably on the deck. The day was now hot, and we were glad of the grateful shadow cast by the mainsail. The Poet had brought up one of the great seanovelist's works to read, but just as he was going to open it he Bookmaker carelessly produced a pack of cards and suggested solo whist.

This, as I warned them at the time, was not a correct yachting thing to do, and I fear that it served to lower us yet further in the opinion of the hands. But it was useless to remonstrate with such men as I had on board. The first day they had been on their good behaviour, they had been posing to some extent for the benefit of the Crew, but now the novelty was worn off they dropped the mask, and set themselves to bring disgrace upon what might have been a well-conducted voyage.

We had been playing quietly for half an hour or so, when suddenly, without the smallest warning, the Tyrant shouted out —"Lay O!" His two minions rushed to the head sheets, the Folly gave a heavy lurch, and the mainsail swung violently across the deck, the boom knocking our straw hats over our eyes. At the same time we found ourselves deprived of the sail's protecting shadow, and exposed to the full glare of an August sun.

The Poet was much annoyed.

"What's the matter? What are you doing?" he shouted. "I want the sail back on the other side."

The Tyrant, who had evidently now come to the conclusion that we were three escaped lunatics for whose lives he was responsible to Providence, gazed at the Poet with pity, as he explained:

"We'm bound to tack, sir, if you wants to get to Cowes. If we bides on the other tack, we'm get to Ryde."

"Then let us go to Ryde," returned the Poet, with decision. "Go where you like, as long as you keep the mainsail on the sunny side of the deck."

But both the Bookmaker and I felt that this childish self-indulgence could not be permitted. Together we impressed on the Poet that if he persisted in his Sybaritic ideas of yachting our partnership must come to a speedy termination. So he reluctantly gave way, and allowed the *Folly* to hold on her course.

Meanwhile, the Tyrant made a well-

meant effort to amuse and interest us by explaining some of the mysteries of seamanship.

I gathered that the main object of seamen is to use language that shall mean exactly the opposite of what you naturally expect. Thus the left side of the vessel is called the port, and the right is called the starboard; but when you want to go towards the left you don't port, but you starboard. Similarly, if you are sailing to the starboard of the place you want to get to, you are said to be on the port tack, and when you are going to port of it, you are then on the starboard tack, or, as the Tyrant expressed it, you have got the starboard tack on board.

It appears that there is a very great satisfaction in having the starboard tack on board, because then everything that floats is bound to get out of your way. If, therefore, you see another yacht coming dangerously near, when you are not on the starboard tack, and feel any doubt as to how to avoid running it down, it is a sound plan to promptly alter your course and get on the starboard tack before the other vessel has time to collide with you. I executed this neat manœuvre myself several times in the course of the next few weeks, and found the benefit of It was often amusing to see the consternation which the crew of the attacking yacht were thrown into by this simple yet effective strategy.

We had not been going long on our new tack before the wind caught the Queen of Hearts and her attendant Knave, and carried them overboard, to find refuge in a watery grave from the vengeance of the King who was about to fall upon them from the Bookmaker's hand. Their beautiful but pathetic end broke up the game, and we turned our attention to the fast-nearing shores of the Isle of Wight.

On one side of the estuary of the Medina lay the great metropolis of yachting, West Cowes. On the other, peeping

forth above the trees, we could just see the towers of a well-built modern residence, standing in its own spacious and secluded grounds, the property of a widow Lady, who is widely known and respected in the island. We heard a good deal of her during our visit, but did not see her, as she lives very quietly and takes no part in public affairs. Her daughter is Governess of Carisbrooke Castle, but she herself is not even on the District Council. We did think of calling before we left, but several men whom we met about assured us that it would be really kinder on our part to refrain.

Cowes appeared to be a bustling little place. It is really nothing but a long wharf, with a succession of landing-stages and slipways in front, and a row of hotels and yacht clubs behind. Along the front runs the deep channel by which the packets from Southampton and elsewhere approach and leave, and on either side of this fairway are the anchorage grounds of the innumerable yachts, millions of pounds' worth of these expensive toys being gathered together here during the great Week.

In the middle of the fleet, as we came up, we caught sight of the two Royal yachts, huge black paddle-steamers, one of which is used by "the Prince" as a floating house during the regattas. He does not fly the lamb's burgee on board this, however, but a royal standard and a union jack, one as a prince and the other as an admiral. Both these ensigns, we observed, were fluttering from the same mast-head. It must be awkward to have so many flags that you have not enough masts to go round. The lamb's burgee is hoisted on the Britannia only, when she is not racing, in which latter case she carries a square pennant with three feathers. I understand that even this device was violently taken by a former Prince of Wales from its rightful owner, so that I suppose the lamb cannot complain of being robbed of his burgee.

As soon as we had passed the outermost buoy in the roads the Tyrant wanted to anchor, but this we would not hear of, and we finally brought up in a nice smooth berth, well out of the waves, and just opposite a quaint old structure which the Tyrant informed us was called the Castle.

And now approached the great moment to which we had looked forward so eagerly, when we were to set the crown on our labours by landing on the soil of the longsought island. The wooden ladder with two steps was brought out, the dinghy was manned, and we solemnly took our places. At such a moment we could afford to be magnanimous, and the Poet ordered another double ration of grog. The Crew and the Victim then bent to the oars, while the Tyrant watched us with glistening eyes from the deck; and we threaded our way skilfully between the throng of steam launches, oil launches, electric launches, sailing boats, and rowing boats, to the shore.

Observing a neat well-built landing-stage in front of us, the Poet directed the dinghy alongside, and we proceeded to disembark. A man in nautical costume, who had been watching us with considerable interest as we approached, came hastily down to meet us as we stepped out. The Poet went up to him, observing, with a graceful bow:

"The Isle of Wight, I believe?"

The man gave him an angry stare, and returned:

"Excuse me, gentlemen, but are you members of the Squadron?"

"Squadron, what squadron?" asked the Poet, mildly.

"The Royal Yacht Squadron, sir, what this slip belongs to," said the man.

The Poet turned to us and asked with the air of a man who cannot burden his memory with trifles:

"Let me see, are we members of this er—squadron, or not?"

"Really, I hardly know," said the

Bookmaker, loftily, "I belong to so many of these things. But if not we will join. You men have no objection to join it, I suppose?"

The mariner in charge of the jetty interrupted at this point:

"You must get off this slip, gentlemen, please. Only members of the Squadron and officers in the Navy is allowed to use this slip."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed, a bright idea striking me. "I am a member of the Inns of Court Rifle Volunteers. Are members of that corps allowed to land here?"

The man was evidently taken out of his bearings by this question.

"I never heard that they was," he answered half-heartedly.

"I expect they are," I said, with increasing confidence. "Just go and enquire at the office, and bring us word."

He gave a rather doubtful glance at us, as if suspecting that we meant to bolt on shore as soon as he was out of the way. But he went to make the enquiry, while we stood about in dignified attitudes, enjoying the admiration of a small crowd which had begun to collect along the front, and which evidently thought we were emperors in our own country.

Presently the man returned, looking angry.

"No, you can't land here," he snapped.
"Please to go to the next slip. The Prince is coming out."

"Prince, what prince?" enquired the Poet, blandly.

The mariner turned purple.

"Look here, gentlemen, do you know where you are, or anything about it?" he gasped. "The Prince of Wales, of course!"

"Still the Prince of Wales! He meets us at every turn," I muttered.

The Poet replied cheerfully to the man:

"O yes, we know him. He is a member of our Inn."

"A Bencher!" put in the Bookmaker, gloomily.

It was too true! After covering all these weary miles of sea and land, in the vain hope of escaping from our oppressors, we now found ourselves confronted with one of them in the very hour of our triumph. It was the last straw, and it broke our hearts.

Bidding a sad adieu to the seneschal of the Squadron slip, we re-entered our dinghy, and had ourselves put ashore without fuss at some steps a little farther on. fro without having to pass through their street.

The prices which prevailed in the shops at first led me to suppose that there was a famine raging on the island. It was not till the third or fourth day of our stay that I made my famous discovery with regard to these shops, namely, that the price of everything is just twice as much to a person in blue clothes as it is to a person in brown. The frightful expense in which I was involved

by my yachting suit sobered even me, though I am a fairly wealthy man. I reckoned afterwards that the extra outlay which I thus incurred was enough to pay for an ordinary tweed suit, to be worn exclusively when shopping in Cowes.

All this has been brought about since Cowes has become the Mecca

"The Isle of Wight, I believe?"

Here we separated, the Poet going to seek out some ladies of his acquaintance who were in the neighbourhood, and the Bookmaker commencing a round of the hotel bars with a view of making a book on the morrow's regatta.

I set out to make my first exploration of the town, and discovered that it contained one very narrow and very crooked street, so narrow and crooked that I now believe that yachts must have been first invented by the inhabitants in order that they might have a means of going to and

of the millionaire. The Poet, the Book-maker, and I, have in consequence formed a league to suppress these persons. We consider that, as a social element, the millionaire is the worst failure of the century. He has lost his attraction, because he has lost his originality. The old idea of a millionaire used to be a man who never washed, and who sat in a kitchen with a sanded floor, drinking champagne out of a brown jug, and lighting a clay pipe with Bank of England notes. Instead of that his modern

representative shaves his beard, avoids jewellery, and is generally a total abstainer. The millionaire has missed his mark. It was within his power to have popularised eccentricity. He might have made shirt sleeves *chic*, and forced society to accept the spittoon. As it is he has chosen to sink to the lowest depths of respectability, and the world has no more need of him.

I admit that I was discouraged by the reception I met with at my first landing on the island I had discovered. But I consoled myself with the thought that my illustrious rival, Columbus, had encountered similar rebuffs in the course of his career, and also with the thought that the Special Commissioner of the Law Quarterly was not present.

The following bulletin, which I despatched to the Common Room, as soon as I reached the telegraph office, will be found to compare favourably for modesty and accuracy with the statements which some modern explorers make about their doings under similar circumstances:

"Island discovered, after stormy and eventful voyage. Triumphal reception. Popular enthusiasm at fever heat. Members of the expedition all sober. Organise lecture tour for our return."

IV.

EVILS OF YACHT-RACING — MEASURING A YACHT—THE QUEEN'S CUP—DISAPPOINTING RESULT — THE POET AND THE LADIES — THE INFANT FIEND — A DEED OF DARKNESS—RYDE—BEMBRIDGE—THE MIRAGE.

Life on board a yacht at Cowes during the Week would be very pleasant if it were not for the races. They spoil it. The extent to which you are expected to sacrifice all pleasure and comfort to the one object of watching a lot of boats sailing round and round makes life a burden too great to be borne.

If the persons who get up these races would have them all at the same time, and get them over, it would not be so bad. But that is just what they won't do. They try to spin the thing out by starting them at intervals all day long, so that you never have five minutes to yourself. As sure as we were down below enjoying ourselves, having breakfast, or, perhaps, a quiet game of cards, the Tyrant would come along to the head of the companion and shout out: "The forties are under weigh"; or, "The twenties are coming up"; and we were obliged to rush madly up on deck, and stand about pretending to take an interest in their proceedings.

I had my knife into the twenties a good deal, because they usually selected as the time for starting the precise moment at which the hot bacon was put upon the table, and, of course, by the time we had seen them safely off it was stone cold. But my worst enemies were the forties, because they invariably broke in upon my last luscious doze, and dragged me out of my warm berth to stand shivering in a cold breeze while they crossed a line or went round a mark-boat, or did something equally useless and absurd. had heard one morning that every forty had gone to the bottom with its owner on board, I tremble to think what my real feelings would have been. But, of course, I recognised at the time that such feelings were wrong, and I have since tried hard to conquer them.

The way in which these classes are fixed is simple enough. The rules of yacht measurement are such as may be worked out by a child. You first ascertain the exact length to a decimal of an inch of the yacht on the water-line, which is obtained by weighing the yacht in a vacuum, and then treating it as floating in water on a spirit-level, at an equilibrium, with no allowance for wind or waves. You then measure it with equal nicety all round, that is to say, across the deck, down the side, under the keel, and up again the other side. Next you multiply the girth thus obtained by 465.8 and add the result to the length; multiply

the length by 728 34 and divide it by the girth measurement, and subtract this result from the other. Then you ascertain to the thousandth decimal of a square inch the area of the sails, which is not arrived at by measuring the sails themselves, but by measuring the masts and spars, and working out the result by trigonometry and logarithms. The figures thus arrived at are multiplied by themselves, divided by the square root of the length, subtracted from the cube root of the girth, and then added to the quotient of the length, girth, and sail area, the final result being divided by 7 + 13 - ₹ ÷ 1704329'0020795.

This comes out 40 or 20 as the case may be, and the yacht is classed accordingly.

The above explanation must be taken subject to any new rules which may be adopted by the Yacht Racing Association before this work reaches the hands of the The Y.R.A. usually alters its printer. method of measurement about twice in every year, in order to shift the yachts about from one class to another, and avoid monotony. The result is sometimes a little confusing to the untrained For instance, the last alteration adopted by them had the curious effect of reducing the rating of the big yachts from about 150 to 100, while it raised the next class, the "forties," to 60 or 65. unfortunate boat that had raced with the forties all its life found itself just thrown out by the fraction of an inch, and compelled to pit itself against Meteor and Britannia.

These complicated arrangements produced the most unfortunate effect on the mind of the Bookmaker, who formed the conviction that the darkest wiles of the turf were "not in it" with the mysteries of yacht-racing.

"I'm out of this, you know, old man," he said, pathetically, on the second day. "I am accustomed to deal with trainers, and bookies, and simple, homely men of

that sort, and I understand their little, childlike dodges. But the way they handicap these blessed yachts sickens me, I give you my word. If that sort of thing were allowed on the turf, it would destroy all confidence. I can see now why the betting is so shy at these places. You put your money on a boat that starts out as a crack twenty, and she comes back in the evening a bad last in the forties' race; I tell you it isn't good enough. Just ordinary, fair cheating I flatter myself I know all about, but there's something about this business that wants clearing up."

I am afraid these hostile conclusions of the Bookmaker were strengthened by the result of the race for the Queen's Cup. As he had failed to make a book on shore he persuaded us to join in a sweep over this classic event. We each put in half-acrown, and as there were four boats entered we gave a ticket to the Tyrant, to whom the whole idea seemed to come as an absolute novelty. The Bookmaker himself drew Meteor, the favourite, the Poet secured Britannia, and I got Hester, a boat which used to be classed as a sixty. What its rating was now nobody seemed The poor old Mohawk, an oldfashioned forty, fell to the Tyrant, who said it was doubtful whether she would However, they all started cross the line. together, at breakfast-time, of course, and we lost sight of them somewhere off Rvde.

The finish was naturally arranged to come off at dinner-time. Just as we were sitting down, we heard the dreaded warning—

"The Meteor's coming in!"

Leaving our soup untasted we hurried up and spent ten minutes in watching the majestic mountain of white canvas pass with light, almost imperceptible, motion along the outside of the anchored fleet of yachts, till it drew into full view opposite the Squadron Castle. The next moment the gun fired.

"She've won, gentlemen," explained

the Tyrant, "if she've saved her time on Britannia."

The Bookmaker did not hear, or did not understand, this last clause.

"Pay up, you Johnnies," he exclaimed, exultantly. "Hang it, there's something in this yacht-racing business after all."

We handed over our half-crowns, subject to the official timing, and went down to our frozen soup. As soon as it was disposed of and a smoking (tinned) lobster placed before us, the Tyrant summoned us again:

"Here comes Britannia, gentlemen!"

We tore ourselves away from the lobster, and ascended to witness *Britannia's* approach. Inch by inch the snowy pyramid glided up behind the thicket of masts, till she too emerged on the line, and received a gun, while her enormous balloon topsail came tumbling down in the bows.

"What does that gun mean?" I asked.
"Britannia 've won," answered the

Tyrant. "She've saved her time on the Meteor."

"But you said *Meteor* had won," cried the Bookmaker, savagely.

"Ah, so she had, sir, but now Britannia 've beaten she on her time."

The Poet laughed gaily.

"Come, old fellow, I'll trouble you to hand over those half-crowns," he said, addressing the infuriated Bookmaker.

The Bookmaker said several things unnecessary to be transcribed.

"Of all the silly, hideous, shameful hoaxes I've ever had to do with, this yacht-racing business is the worst," he concluded. "Take your miserable money; and if ever I bet on another of these things you may hang me at the yard-arm, that's all I can say."

I should have been glad if it had been all. Unfortunately the Bookmaker could, and did, say very much more. I thought myself that his violence was uncalled-for. I like to see a man take a little thing of that kind good-temperedly; but I am bound to admit that the Poet made things

worse by the ill-natured and aggressive ostentation with which he pocketed the half-crowns.

We went below once more and made a half-hearted attack on the lobster. The next course was (tinned) curried chicken, and we had got nearly half-way through it when we were again interrupted:

"The Hester's in sight!"

"Bother the *Hester*/" said the Poet, crossly. "The race is over now."

I hesitated. The Tyrant shouted again:

"The Hester's coming up fine."

"I suppose I ought to go up and see my own boat finish," I said.

And I made my way on deck, followed reluctantly by the others.

In the absence of the two giants, Hester seemed a very imposing craft, as she came gliding gracefully up towards the line, with a man just visible swarming up the mast ready to cast loose the topsail. Before it could begin to flutter the sound of the gun again came booming from the Castle.

Why, what is that for?" I demanded.

"Hester 've won," replied the Tyrant, impassively. "She've saved her time on Britannia. I had a thought as she were going to."

I turned with a sarcastic smile to the Poet, who presented a picture of stupefaction.

"Now, old man, I'll thank you for those half-crowns," I remarked, with quiet triumph. "And let this be a lesson to you how you indulge in premature boasting. Any judge of yachts could have told that *Hester* would win this race. For her size she is the finest craft affoat. Come, pay up, and don't grumble."

But the Poet did grumble. He showed himself in a very unfavourable light indeed.

"Well, this is simply the most childish, absurd folly I have ever seen," he exclaimed. "It is positively disgusting. It is turning what ought to be a fine

manly sport into a farce. No more yachtracing for me!" And he almost flung the seven-and-sixpence at me.

I laughed in his face as I pocketed the coins with empressement.

"Don't lose your temper, my dear fellow," I said, cheerfully. "If you can't take it better than that you ought not to have joined in at all. It is really very funny the way you two men have been bitten. I can't help laughing, you look so cross over it. But let's come down and finish our dinner in peace.'

They obeyed sullenly, and sat at the table looking daggers at me, though I could see the Bookmaker felt a certain pleasure in the Poet's discomfiture. We were just pouring out our coffee when the Tyrant announced the arrival of the Mohawk; but as my interest in the race was now over I resisted his pressing solicitations to go on deck, nor did I fathom the meaning of the strange glances exchanged between my two companions.

Suddenly there was a sound as of a gun being fired. Instantly these men, whom I had looked upon as my friends, sprang to their feet with looks of exultant malice, and burst into loud, discordant laughter.

"What is the matter?" I asked, coldly.

The reply came down the companionway from the lips of the unconscious Tyrant:

"The Mohawk have won, gentlemen. She've saved her time on the Hester!"

And almost before I could grasp the meaning of this stunning blow, the Poet shouted out:

"Now, my boy, just hand over those half-crowns to the skipper, will you? And let this be a lesson to you not to indulge in boasting. Pay up, and assume a pleasant smile."

The reader will agree with me that the best of men would have given way to irritation under such circumstances. I admit that I lost my temper and said things which I had better have left unsaid. I gave the poor Tyrant his seven-and-sixpence, which I did not grudge him; but I did not conceal my opinion of the whole transaction. I said:

"They call this a race, a fair, open race. That may be the opinion entertained of it in yachting circles; I cannot say. To me it appears to be the most miserable, contemptible, abominable, swindling piece of chicanery that has ever come under my notice. I do not intend to bet on yacht-races again. I may bet on horses or dogs, or bicycles or motorcars, or black-beetles or slugs, if I am tempted, but not on yachts."

These remarks, instead of being received with sympathy, only served as food for coarse merriment to the bounders whom I had been foolish enough to bring on board. The result was a quarrel, for which I was not to blame, and which was only healed the next day by the rumour that a protest had been lodged, as all the yachts had gone round the wrong buoy, and the race would have to be sailed over again.

The real charm of Cowes is the feeling of lawlessness and barbaric independence, combined with easy access to civilisation. In the morning we lay about on deck in the sun, smoking our curly meerschaums, and watching the people on board the other yachts all round us smoking theirs. In the afternoon we went on shore, and pursued our scientific investigations. As the result, I regret that we found ourselves unable to report favourably of the billiard tables at Cowes, but racing men will be glad to know that Sporting Life may be obtained there.

The Poet was more fortunate in his particular branch of study. We came upon him the second or third day seated on the Green, surrounded by three lovely women who seemed to be offering him flowers. These the Poet was accepting with condescension. It reminded me of

the last time the Poet went to a picnic. When he came home he complained that he hadn't enjoyed himself.

"There was no kissing," he said.
"When I go to a picnic, I don't go for the sake of sitting on damp grass eating marble pies, and swigging beastly gingerade. I go for the sake of the kissing in in the woods afterwards."

"Why, wouldn't they let you kiss them?" we asked, amazed at such behaviour on the part of any properminded women.

"I didn't ask them," he responded,

with dignity.
"I never kiss women. It is they who kiss me. But to-day they all seemed too shy."

The Poet's experience has been singularly fortunate. Yet he is modest about it. He claims that women bore him.



The Poet ashore.

We should probably have stayed on longer at Cowes but for the Poet's ill-advised discovery of the Infant Fiend.

Of course, when we set out for this island we expected we might have some trouble with the natives, but I think if we had anticipated meeting with the Fiend we should have abandoned our enterprise. The Fiend was an evil watersprite, or nixy, who haunted the beach in the form of a small girl of ten years old, and preyed upon mortal yachtsmen. She passed herself off on the Poet originally as the daughter of perfectly respectable acquaintances of his in Cowes, and having thus established a hold on him, she went on

to fasten her yoke upon the whole three or us, like Sindbad's old man of the sea.

As surely as we ventured to go ashore, we found the Fiend lying in wait for us on the slip, and from that moment she never left us. It was her leading idea to drag us into all the pastrycook's shops, where she consumed incredible quantities of ices and cakes, particularly doughnuts, a species of round bullet with a small nest of currants in the centre, which forms the one great staple of the Isle of Wight. These things are occasionally made with jam in the middle instead, but that is an

innovation, and should not be encouraged.

If we refused to be beguiled into these places, the Fiend followed us about the town, making us ridiculous in the eyes of other yacht-

ing men. It was useless to seek refuge in billiard-rooms and similar evil haunts, in the hope of shaking her off. The Fiend appeared to have a peculiar relish for such resorts. She liked us to play billiards, because it enabled her to appropriate our half-finished cigars and cigarettes, as we laid them down on the edge of the table, and smoke them out She preferred the cigars to the cigarettes, and preferred the Bookmaker's full-flavoured Mexicans to the Poet's mild Havanas. It was asserted that she occasionally chewed the cigar stumps instead of smoking them, but I am not sure as to this. It may be true, but it has not been fully proved, and therefore I decline to state it as a fact. Embittered as I naturally am against the Fiend, I should feel it wrong to accuse a female of anything that could be considered unladylike, on insufficient evidence.

But the situation became altogether too strained when the Fiend, not content with making our lives a misery to us on shore, began to make a practice of boarding us on our own yacht. The Poet was responsible for her first appearance there; he pretended that he had brought her off in the hope that the motion of the waves might avenge our wrongs for us. The Fiend at once took possession of the



The reign of the Infant Fiend.

vessel, ransacked the saloon, explored the sleeping berths, and made her way into the forecastle, where she established a reign of terror that made the Tyrant's rule seem effete. She wanted to stay and sleep on board, but this the Bookmaker, in the interests of propriety, would not allow.

When, on the top of all this, she took to addressing us by our surnames, without the prefix of "Mr." usual between ladies and gentlemen, and tried to introduce us to various small boys who appeared to constitute a sort of band of outlaws under her leadership, even the Poet admitted that it was time to rise and take a bloody revenge; and our revolt became merely a question of means and opportunity.

The following narrative is from the pen of a well-known author whose historical romances are widely and deservedly popular:—

"THE FATE OF THE INFANT FIEND."

"It was midnight!

"The pale spectral moon stole forth from behind the sombre drift of cloud, and looked down upon the deck of the pirate craft.

"What did she behold?

"The crew were sleeping peacefully below. All around was still. Who, then, were those three cloaked and hooded figures crouching in the lee of the hatch, exchanging muttered whispers mingled with strange and fearful imprecations?

"Were they—could they be?—the farfamed Pirates of the Solent, men whose lawless deeds had blanched the cheek of every self-respecting yachting man at Cowes? Ah!

"And was it true that they were plotting a terrible vengeance on a young and innocent female? Surely not!

"Let us draw near and listen to their discussion.

"It is the tallest of the three figures who is speaking:

"'It seems a low-down sort of thing to do. But, after all, we must get rid of her somehow.'

"The voice of the second personage replies:

"'We can't go on like this. Since the law is powerless to help us, we must defend ourselves.'

"And the third voice adds:

"'In such a case brutality is the truest kindness. But which of us is to carry out the dreadful sentence?'

"They drew lots, and the lot falls on the last speaker. Then they slink guiltily below, and try to stifle the gnawings of conscience with whiskey ere they retire to rest. "In the morning the chosen delegate, known among his evil comrades as the Poet, proceeds to execute their terrible purpose.

"He goes ashore. On landing he is met by a fair and seemingly guileless maiden of some ten summers, who greets him with fearless confidence and playfully demands an ice.

"Masking his countenance in hollow smiles, the ruffian promises her the dainty. He takes her by the hand and leads her through tortuous streets and byways to a lonely confectioner's, situated on the very confines of the town.

"They enter, and while the unsuspecting child seats herself at a small table, her treacherous companion takes the confectioner aside and whispers in his ear, at the same time pressing into his hand a large silver coin, of the size and appearance of a florin. The mercenary knave nods his head, retires for a few seconds into an inner room, and then emerges bearing a large flower-pot filled to the brim with the luscious delicacy known as strawberry ice.

"This he sets before the damsel, who utters a naïve cry of surprise and delight, and at once begins to devour it with the aid of a small mustard-spoon manufactured out of bone.

"The villain, after watching her set to work, suddenly draws forth his watch and exclaims, 'I am just going next door to get my hair cut. Wait here till I come back.'

"Never was blacker falsehood uttered by human lips.

"The maiden nods a careless assent, and he steals forth. The moment he is outside he breaks into a run, which he keeps up till he has reached the waterside. Leaping madly into the boat which is waiting for him, he quickly finds himself once more aboard the pirate craft.

"One glance at his face tells his companions that the deed is done. Word is hastily passed round to the crew, the sails are set, the anchor hauled up, and ere long the *Folly*, has become a distant speck on the horizon.

"The cowards have fled, leaving their victim to gradually realise her awful fate.
"She is marooned!"

There are several buoys between Cowes and Ryde which are said to afford good sport, but we made no attempt to negotiate them. We left that to the Tyrant, while we tried to deaden our minds with drink and other things. I set myself to write up the Log, the Bookmaker became absorbed in the perusal of a penny dreadful which he had stooped to borrow from the Victim, and the Poet, with the shallow sentimentality common to poets, went to work on a pathetic triolet about his victim of that morning which moved him to He wanted at first to put it in the Log, but altered his mind when I reminded him that the Log was evidence, which might be used to criminate us on our trial.

The Tyrant manifested a strange antipathy to one buoy, a small black one just at the entrance to the roads, which bore the legend, "Prince Consort Shoal." We passed it both coming and going, and each time the Tyrant attacked it with a bitterness which I could not understand. The buoy was a perfectly harmless, inoffensive buoy, as far as I could see, and I said so.

"But there aren't nor a shoal there," he grumbled. "They don't want nor a buoy. He'm just in the way."

And to prove his words he recklessly sailed right over the alleged shoal, to our inward trepidation.

Ryde is said to be a very delightful town. But we did not visit it. I understand that it contains a corporation, with a real mayor, a theatre, a garden, a canoepond, and other exciting and festive attractions. But our object being rather to explore the wilder outlying regions at the back of the island, and there being a

charge of twopence for landing on the pier, we left Ryde on the starboard and went on to Bembridge.

In order to reach Bembridge we had to stand out to a round object in the offing something like a cake, with a draught-board pattern round the sides. The Tyrant told us that this cake was a fort, intended to protect the islanders from invasion. It did not protect them from us.

Rounding this object on the port tack, we jibed and bore up for Sea-View. Here there is another pier, a suspension one, which is said to vibrate beneath the tread of persons walking along it. As we found we got as much vibration as we wanted on board the *Folly*, we didn't land here either.

A little farther on rose up another cake, a white one this time, guarding the entrance to Bembridge Harbour. We passed it in safety.

I pause here to remark that if our voyage resulted in no other discovery, it at least enabled us to correct the common error of geographers, including such an authority as the compiler of the Times Atlas, in supposing that Brading Harbour is still in existence, washing the walls of Brading town. That harbour, formerly the headquarters of a Roman fleet which protected the shores of Britain against Saxon pirates, was drained fifteen or twenty years ago by a Saxon philanthropist, named Jabez Balfour. (The forts didn't keep him out.) Brading is now an inland village, and the little corner which remains of the ancient harbour is usually called after the hamlet of Bembridge at its mouth.

I found some difficulty in convincing the Poet of these truths. He had brought a copy of the *Atlas* along, and when I took him inland, during our stay, and pointed out the waving fields of grass stretching between us and Brading, he affected incredulity.

"I tell you what it is," he said, "this is a mirage. We can't really see those fields and trees, because they are not there. Look at the map. You can see for yourself that all this is a wide expanse of water."

I looked at the map and was shaken but not convinced.

"Can that be the map of some other island?" I hazarded. "Or, perhaps, this is not the Isle of Wight after all? We may have got to the Isle of Man by mistake, or to some island whose existence has never been suspected by geographers."

"No, it's a mirage, that's what it is, you may depend on it," he answered, firmly.

We submitted our doubts to the able and courteous manager of the Harbour Company. He said:

"I see your difficulty, and sympathise with it. I have myself frequently had misgivings as to whether this may not be all what the Buddhist philosophy speaks of as Maya—illusion. Those fields look plausible, that heather has an air of naturalness which is calculated to impose on rash and credulous minds. But such is life. In the words of Burke—'What shadows we are, what shadows we pursue!' Take my advice, leave this place before your minds become permanently unhinged. Go where glory waits you—go anywhere, in fact—but go away."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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WEST AFRICA AND THE EMPIRE:*

BEING A NARRATIVE OF A RECENT JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION THROUGH THE GOLD COAST HINTERLAND.

BY LIEUT. F. B. HENDERSON, R.N.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR.

T

AVING been asked to give my experiences as a Travelling Commissioner in the Gold Coast Hinterland, with some account of the duties that

devolve upon the representative of Law and Order, and the Colonial Office, in regions remote from the comparative civilisation of the Coast, I have written out the following narrative.

The diary in which I had made daily notes during my journey was unfortunately lost at the time of my encounter with the Sofas, whose minds, I hope, derived as much benefit from it as their bodies did from my wardrobe.

I have therefore to

rely upon my recollection of the events through which I have passed, and if any slips occur I trust they will be charitably assigned to what in West Africa is called "Coast Memory," an excuse invariably accepted for aberrations in travellers' narratives.

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P

Lieut, Henderson's route.
(From a map prepared by himself.)

I left Accra in November, 1896, with the intention of visiting kings and chiefs in our Hinterland with whom we had treaties, to show them that although they were out of sight they were none the less

> dear to the memory of the Colonial Office. I left early in the morning for Baraku, a small town on the sea-coast nearly twenty-six miles from Accra. It must be remembered that in West Africa everything has to be carried on men's heads; be it presents for kings in the shape of smart cloths, brass rods, salt. looking-glasses, beads, knives, pomatum, scents, etc., which would the resources of an Universal Provider, or your own means of living, without

mentioning ammunition for the escort and large sums of silver monies.

In the scramble for loads which arose at starting, I was much amused to see a powerful carrier eject my bedding-bag, a comparatively light load though somewhat large in appearance, to seize and go off

[&]quot;While this number was passing through the press the announcement appeared of Lieutenant Henderson's appointment as a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, in recognition of his services in the conduct of certain military operations against the Sofas in West Africa in April last, whilst holding the appointment of Travelling Commissioner, under the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony. These operations Lieutenant Henderson describes in three articles, written exclusively for The Idler, of which this is the first.—Editor, The Idler.

with my heaviest load, because its bulk was small. Under this load he groaned and sweated, a sadder if not a wiser man, the whole way to the Hinterland. Carriers are not allowed to change their loads when they have once taken them.



Lieutenant F. B. Henderson, R.N., D.S.O. (Photo by W. & D. Downey, 61, Ebury Street.)

Our column was numerous, consisting of nearly 300 carriers and an escort of 100 Haussas (constabulary) under Captain Irvine, Assistant Inspector and native officer Geinalah (a fine old warrior whose breast is decorated with several medals, amongst them being the much coveted one for Distinguished Service in the Field), as well as a well-appointed

medical contingent under the orders of Dr. Part, Assistant Colonial Surgeon.

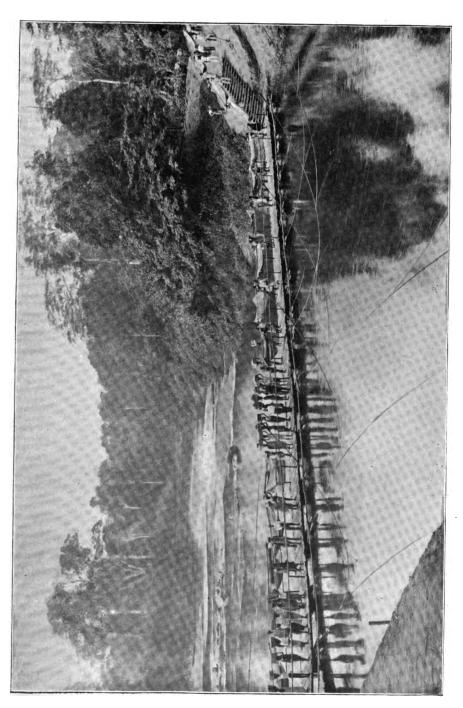
Upon starting out on a journey of this nature prudence dictates that it is better, as a rule, to make the first day's march a short one, to accustom the carriers to their loads; but on this occasion necessity

compelled us to do otherwise, as there is no place nearer than Baraku where a column like ours could halt for the night and obtain the necessary refreshment, which would be mostly of a vegetarian character.

Haussas and carriers are paid threepence a day "subsistence money," with which they have to purchase their provisions; and one of the difficulties the traveller has to contend with is to arrange marches so that his column can obtain the supplies they want. It is usual to send a messenger ahead to warn the Chief, in whose village you intend to stay

the night, of your approach, informing him of your numbers, and directing him to make a market for your men. We arrived late in the day, and the carriers, limp, lame, and dejected, were not all in till late in the evening.

As a result of this long first day's march, we had to proceed by easy stages to Salt Pond. From thence we struck north



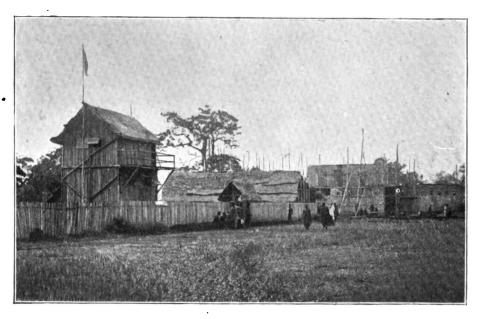
and were soon on the good road which runs from Cape Coast to Prahsu, having broken our journey at the different places where the Government has built resthouses. These rest-houses for the brokendown official biped are small bungalows built of swish (dried and compacted mud), and they are in charge of a caretaker whose main duty is to do his best to keep the plagues of Egypt on the outside.

At Prahsu we halted for the usual

Foremen of Works, the finishing touches being put by the corps of Royal Engineers.

The photograph represents this bridge with a hammock-train and some carriers in the act of crossing. The bridge was subsequently swept away by the rise of the river in the wet season, there being often a rise of over twenty feet between its high banks.

From this point the read deteriorates, and becomes a mere track through swamps



The temporary Residency and Fort in Course of Construction. Kumasi.

day's rest for the carriers. It is customary, when making a journey of any length, to halt the column every fourth or fifth day in order to ease the men's feet; at these times the carrier enjoys a sort of seventh heaven, consisting of alternative meals and sleep during the whole day.

The river Prah we crossed in "dugouts," i.e., hollowed out trunks of trees, large enough to carry about twenty-five men. When I was last here, during the late Ashanti Expedition, the river had been bridged, an undertaking commenced and nearly completed by one of our (four) often intersected by watercourses, which last are generally bridged by a greasy tree-trunk. While crossing one of these decidedly primitive bridges on his return from Kumasi, a well-known and substantial officer, who was vigorously vociferating that "he was no blooming Blondin," subsided stern foremost into the by no means pellucid stream, amidst the laughter of the onlookers. There is always something amusing in the misfortunes of others.

I regret to state that before entering Kumasi my head-man of the carriers, a

man 'great in Israel,' was detected stealing articles of value from the natives, and in consequence did his four months 'hard' at Kumasi.

I found Kumasi very much changed since I was there after the expedition. photograph is here given of a somewhat important function which took place after the white troops had left Kumasi. Seven of the principal sub-kings, formerly vassals of King Prempeh, who had been previously declared "henceforth independent rulers," made treaties and acknowledged the suzerainty of the Queen. These were the Kings of Kokufu, Mampon, Aguna, and Juabin. Kwahu, Efisu, Ofinsu Treaties were signed with these gentlemen by the late Governor, Sir William Maxwell, K.C.M.G., who was seated under an umbrella borrowed for precautionary reasons, the sun being still high, from the King of Bekwai, who had himself previously signed a treaty with Sir Francis Scott on his way to Kumasi.

Another photograph shows the temporary Residency with flag flying built by the late Colonel Pigott, C.B.D.S.O., at the time when he was acting Resident.

The object of the building seemed to be somewhat misunderstood by one very numerous section of the denizens of Kumasi; I refer to the rats, who occupied the place as a sort of public playground, to the great discomfort of the official occupants, whose presence was entirely ignored. In the background of the photograph, appears the new fort in process of building; this fort was designed, marked out, and partly built by Captain Phillips of the Royal Engineers, who remained behind for the purpose after the expedition had left Though unfinished, it presents a fine and imposing appearance; very different from the ordinary run of modern fortifications built in such countries. The fort's position is very good, commanding the King's palace, and also the roads to Bontuku and the coast. It could, moreover, if necessary, accommodate several hundred men. There is an observatory in a high cotton tree close to the fort, and in one face of the walls, the one, by the bye, shown in the photo, is the Residency, a handsome building with verandahs and double windows.

This is constructed from granite, brought by King Kofi Kali from the Cape Coast for his palace, which was destroyed in 1874 when the first Ashanti Expedition evicted him from it.

The fort contains ample storehouses and a good well nearly ninety feet deep.

It is flanked by two gun-towers of two stories each, roofed over with galvanised iron painted white, covering an inner roof of wood with an air-space to ensure coolness. The enclosure wall of considerable height and thickness is protected against assault by sharp sword-toothed galvanised irons. All the arrangements are admirably adapted to enable the guns and Maxims with which it is provided to sweep a space which has been cleared all around it. The materials from which the fort was mainly constructed are bricks, locally made.

Trade, the all-important factor, is now gradually coming back to Kumasi, and it is hoped that the traders of the Coast will more and more take advantage of the settled condition of things to establish depôts, and what the old East Indians used to call factories.

A good deal has been said about the deserted appearance of Kumasi at the present moment, as compared with the aspect it must have presented at the time when it was the centre and "hub" of that peculiar type of West African civilisation which existed in the golden age of Prempeh.

In the days of the Ashanti Kingdom all the territorial magnates or county families of the old *régime* had, as a matter of fashion, more or less compulsory, their town residence in Kumasi. To Kumasi they flocked, partly because it

was expedient to show themselves under the eyes of royalty, and partly to comply with those dictates which required them not to absent themselves on those occasions when the native rank and beauty were collected together for the purpose of enjoying the sight of human sacrifices, or some of the other equally characteristic diversions of the Ashanti Hurlingham.

We have changed all that, and the gay circle of King Prempeh's Court is dispersed to the four winds, while the fallen monarch himself is sadly musing over the "days that are done" under British lock and key at Sierra Leone.

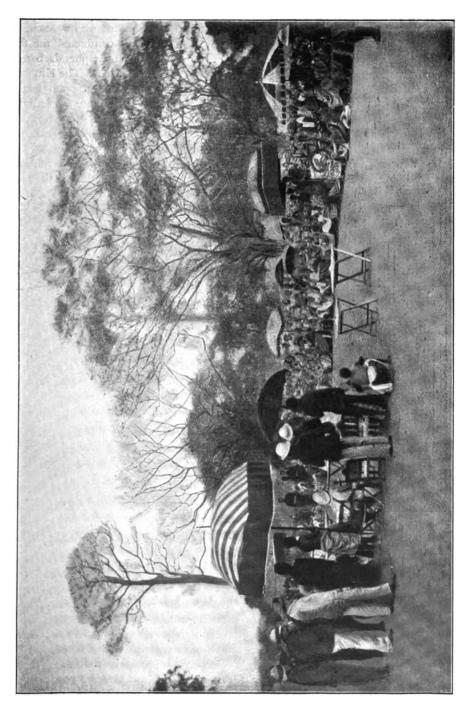
I had hoped and looked forward to meeting here my old friend, Captain Donald Stewart, Resident of Kumasi; but was disappointed to find that he had left for the eastern part of our Hinterland some days previous to my arrival. I could not help envying him the good fortune which called him to that part of the country, which Ferguson, himself a keen sportsman, described to me as a sort of paradise where the lion, elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, and other large game, not to speak of smaller deer, were awaiting the advent of the enterprising sportsman. Curiously enough, such game was by no means plentiful on the western side of the Hinterland, though every now and then one came across the "spoor" of the larger wild animals, or were diverted by an occasional scare through signs of their presence near camp.

On leaving Kumasi for Kintampe, about ninety miles distant, the column started soon after mid-day for our next halting-place, which I was informed was distant about seven miles. Being detained by business, I allowed the column to go ahead of me, as I knew that, though starting later in the afternoon, I ought to arrive at our resting-place before nightfall; but I found to my annoyance that I had been misinformed as to the distance, and I was overtaken by night before arriving at my destination. Darkness in West Africa

necessitates slow travelling, otherwise the bare feet of one's hammock-men suffer. About 6.30 p.m. I saw through the bush ahead of me what appeared to me to be a man carrying a lantern, crossing from right to left. Expecting to be near our camp, I thought it was possibly someone who had been sent back to show us the However, a minute or two afterwards, Ferguson, who, like myself, had been detained at Kumasi, came up and asked me if I had seen the light. I replied that I had, and concluded that we were close to our camp. He answered that we were yet some way from it, and the light we had seen was one of those lights which the natives say are carried by evil spirits. He then told me of a light which he had often seen himself at the back of the cemetery at Accra, between seven and eight o'clock in the evening, and which, so far as he knew, could not be accounted for by any human I confess I was somewhat incredulous, but he offered, on return to Accra, to show me this apparition.

The longer one lives on the coast the more fully the European becomes aware that West Africa is the home of mysteries which up to the present the white man has certainly not been able to solve; moreover, certain curious phases of negro life in the West Indies which have baffled the research of the enquirer had, after all, their origin in that land of the inexplicable, West Africa. To the existence of these mysteries no one would bear more ready testimony than Mr. Ferguson; though by education, habits, and sympathies he was a thorough Englishman, a man of cultured tastes and considerable knowledge, and last, but not least, a good sportsman.

An hour after seeing this strange light I arrived at our camp. The village, of whose hospitality we availed ourselves, enjoyed under the Ashanti régime a most undesirable notoriety as a place from whose bourne few travellers returned.



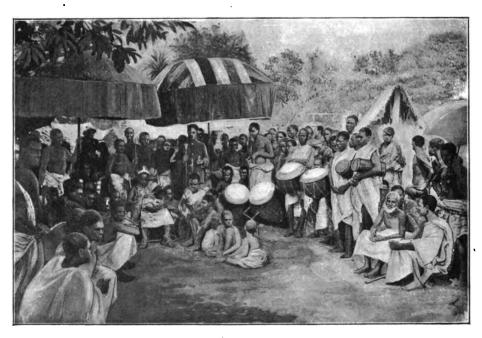
The British Governor signing treaties with Kings of Mampon, Kokufu, Juabin, Kwahu, Aguna, and representatives of Ofinsu and Efisu.
Palaver Square, Kumasi, February 10th, 1896.

What may have been the cause of this I am unable to say, but I noticed that nearly every one of the alleys which, as in all African villages, branch off from the main street terminated in a cul de sac.

The first place of note we reached was Nkoranza, the capital of the country of that name. It was the usual African village or town, of small swish compounds, each formed of small sheds opening into an enclosed square or courtyard. Within

surrounded by his retinue who welcomed me to Nkoranza, and conducted me to my quarters, one of the compounds, bare, indeed, but perfectly clean. The King is a small man with a pleasant open face, and a warrior of much repute according to native report, and, as the hostile Ashanti was well aware, by no means "reserved in battle."

This place being under the government of Kumasi, where the Resident is the re-



The King of Nkoransa.

a few yards of the town are the cultivated grounds where the crops necessary for the subsistence of the inhabitants were grown. In this case there was a considerable interval between the town and the forest, the village having suffered and shrunk in dimensions, consequent upon the repeated attacks of the Ashantis during their war of 1893. This is an occurrence which is by no means infrequent in West Africa, as any reader of the travels of Barth will remember.

According to native etiquette I found the King scated just outside the town

presentative of the Great White Queen, official etiquette was waived, and his Majesty paid me a visit without ceremony, having, at Mr. Ferguson's request, attired himself in full Palaver rig. He then graciously allowed me to take the photograph of him which is reproduced.

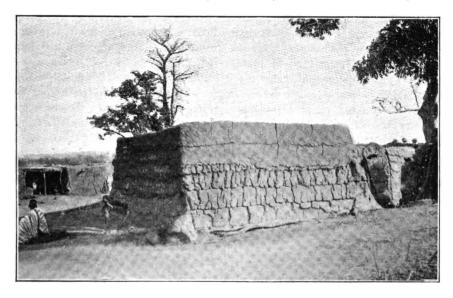
As it was necessary to stop here to rest the carriers I was offered a morning's buffalo shooting in the royal preserves, and went out under guidance of the royal huntsmen with the highest anticipations, but, unfortunately, not so much as a guinea-fowl was to be seen. Here also

Captain Irvine took the opportunity of giving the escort and carriers a lesson in bush drill, the most important part of which is rallying on the sound of the alarm into a suitable formation for receiving the attack of an imaginary enemy. The hammock-men and carriers were also instructed in putting up and taking down tents for which hitherto we had had no use.

After leaving Nkoranza we found a good deal of difference in the character of the country through which we were marching. Hitherto our course had lain through

most limit. To this point we had been marching along the excellent road, nearly fifty feet wide, made by the late Colonel Pigott, who also constructed at this place some quarters, where I remained for one day, and which, according to African ideas, are commodious and comfortable.

This town was then the furthermost limit of civilisation, being occupied by a detachment of Haussas under a native officer. Here I was requested to receive a deputation of Haussa traders who came to complain that trade was being diverted



A Mo hut.

forests of high trees and dense undergrowth, but now the forest was only met with in belts, and the greater part of our way was through undulating plains of park-like country, where the grass grew high and rank, though in the dry season it is burned down by frequent bush fires, which, in the more open plains, are the cause of serious danger and annoyance to travellers.

After three days' march we arrived at Kintampe, formerly an important trade centre, but nearly destroyed during the war between Ashanti and Nkoranza, of which latter country it is the northern-

westwards by Samory, and also that food was scarce. The photograph shows the deputation marching to meet me, some of the principals bearing umbrellas, at one time insignia of nobility, but now borne by pushing and pretentious individuals with no more real claim than have those who adopt the title of Esquire in England.

I listened patiently, but as it was not my "palaver" I referred them to the Resident of Kumasi. To obtain a patient hearing is the chief desire of the natives in these parts; as long as they are granted this—and tedious work it is sometimes to listen to their ramblings—they appear to go away quite contented, whether their story is believed and the case decided in their favour or not.

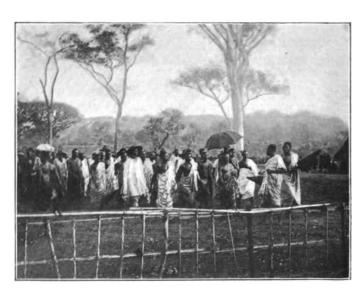
We resumed our march early in the afternoon, as our carriers were by this time in seasoned condition, the weaker ones having dropped out and been replaced by others; so we marched cheerfully along. My eight hammock-men, proud of an uniform in which I had dressed them, comprising dark blue pants and frocks trimmed with red, with sashes and caps to match, carried me along with laughter and jest. The merriment, I fancy, was often at my expense, for on more than one occasion when I enquired the cause I was answered, "Massa, I no fit to tell you," and I therefore concluded that they were speaking of me in much the same terms as the serving men might have used when they were carrying Falstaff in the linen-basket.

We were now crossing the Mo country, which is a dependent of Nkoranza, and, having left the forest belt behind us, were traversing what I have before referred to as plains, a kind of undulating prairie land, with clumps of trees scattered here and there.

We reached our resting-place rather late in the evening. Here, for the first time, we had to use our tents, as the fairly lofty and airy huts of the Ashanti country were succeeded by the solid, but close and stifling huts of the Mo country, which might have been comfortable in the Polar regions, but here would suffocate an ordinary European in about an hour.

We pitched our tents in the open spaces of the village, disturbing the ground as little as possible, as such a proceeding would have been resented and followed by an incursion of unsavoury and poisonous insects of all descriptions. So far we had been able to take our night's rest in perfect security, but we were soon to reach a country where strict military precautions had to be taken to guard against the possibility of attack by the ubiquitous and prowling Sofas. Of this I shall speak next month.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



The deputation of Haussa traders.

"CYRANO DE BERGERAC."

BY WILLIAM F. S. WALLACE.

ILLUSTRATED BY T. H. ROBINSON.



NE of the greatest successes in the history of the modern Parisian stage is that of Cyrano de Bergerac, a play by Edmond Rostand, at pre-

sent running at the Porte Saint Martin

Theatre, and the fact that Sir Henry Irving has secured the English rights of production will, it is to be hoped, enable Londoners to see this most remarkable piece. tween Irving and Coquelin there is a great distance, both in method and physique, thought and expression, and they have ere now challenged one another by playing similar rôles as well as by discussing the philosophy of their art. dedicating the printed version of the play to Coquelin the author says: "C'est à l'âme de Cyrano que je voulais dédier ce poème, mais puisqu'elle

a passé en vous, Coquelin, c'est à vous que je le dédie." This is indeed high praise, and M. Rostand will have to think of what he will say to Sir Henry's Cyrano, for if ever the soul of the hero lived in anyone it lives in our leading actor, and, during a representation, it was impossible

to resist seeing him again and again in the part. Therefore we pray for a speedy consummation of our desires. The gods have been good to M. Rostand, for not only is he a very young man—youth in these days has no age limit to speak of—but he has succeeded in most of his plays. The London public had an opportunity of seeing his La Princesse Lointaine some three or four years ago, introduced to them at Daly's Theatre by Madame

Sarah Bernhardt, and last Easter the distinguished French actress produced at La Renaissance his mystery play, La Samaritaine, a work of great beauty founded on the story of the Woman of Samaria.

The effect of the present piece, Cyrano de Bergerac, is phenomenal, for in addition to its being entirely in verse, it is absolutely devoid of those qualities which, rightly or wrongly, are usually associated with Parisian successes, so that the noble heroism and sublime self-abnegation which it portrays are intensified the more.

There is so much in

the plot, detail apparently trivial that is developed before the play ends, that to give a concise summary much reference to incident and action would have to be sacrificed. It is in the fullest sense a play of action; but it is equally a literary play; the splendid irony, the comedy that



M. Edmond Rostand.

is so nearly allied to tragedy, the delicate love passages, all are as important to the ear as the movement is to the eye, and the author has produced a work which has overcome the crux of the literary drama.

To recount the plot it seems better to follow the progress of this "heroic comedy" step by step. It may be prefaced by stating that the time of action is 1640, in Paris in the reign of Louis XIII., a period when "les Précieuses" were held up to A certain stateliness of diction ridicule. and learning had given place to affectation; no man was deemed worthy of a woman's glance unless he could turn a verse as deftly as he could wield a foil, and if he entered the lists of love he had to be possessed of eloquence. of the play, Cyrano, is a Gascon, a boaster, and soldier of fortune; the edge of his wit is no less keen than the point of his rapier; his tongue is as deadly a weapon as his blade. Nature, however, as if to balance these accomplishments, bestowed upon him an enormous misshapen nose, which is the source of all his troubles. Of it no man dare speak jestingly or swords are drawn; it goes before him as a challenge to him who risks alluding to it; it makes poor Cyrano's life one of disaster, asking for pity that dare not be given for fear of provoking a quarrel. On this whimsical idea the play is built, and the author's skill lies in the masterly way he has steered clear of burlesque. Of an actor who wears a grotesque visage and yet can compel the sympathy of his audience, rare qualities are demanded, and in this respect M. Rostand and Coquelin alike show their mastery over their dramatic material.

When the curtain rises we see before us the tennis-court of the Hôtel de Bourgogne. It is fitted up as a theatre for representations of *La Clorise*, a play by Baro, much in vogue at the time. The audience arrive, and the candles are lit. There are cavaliers and citizens, lackeys

and pages, and the gallery is filled with In the crowd is Christian de ladies. Neuvillette, a young nobleman who has come to Paris to join the Corps des Gardes as cadet. His eyes turn to the gallery, seeking there the face of a lady whom he has seen and fallen in love with. When she enters. Christian learns for the first time that her name is Magdeleine Robin, otherwise Roxane, after the fashion of les Précieuses to assume fanciful titles. is an orphan, cousin of Cyrano, and she is accompanied by the Comte de Guiche, who is trying to arrange a marriage between her and a certain M. de Valvert, failing certain designs of his own. Hardly, however, have Christian's eyes met hers than he is called away to help a comrade who has got into a scrape by lampooning de Guiche, and for whom a hundred men are lying in wait at the Porte de The audience are on the qui vive for an unrehearsed scene, for Cyrano has forbidden one of the actors to appear for reasons which will be given later on, and as our hero's temper is well known public curiosity is on the alert. Among the crowd is Ragueneau, a pastrycook of poetic bent, and he furnishes the "comic relief" to the play. The mimic play begins, and Montfleury, an actor of heavy build and gross features, steps forward to Suddenly he is indeliver his lines. terrupted by a voice from the crowd who are standing in the parterre. It is Cyrano's, demanding why his interdict is not respected. A great hubbub ensues, some encouraging Montfleury to continue in the hope of a fight; but the Gascon's blood is up, and he will be obeyed. Challenging the audience, he offers to despatch them one by one with all the honours. those who wish to die, hold up their hands," he cries. No one speaks. "Is it modesty that forbids your seeing my blade naked? Very well. I wish to see the theatre purged of this fluxion (i.e., Montfleury), if not . . . then the bistoury," and he lays his hand on his

sword. Someone then insults him, and he proceeds to discourse on his nose in a passage which gives Coquelin full scope. It is Valvert, urged by de Guiche, who

brings himself to the point of Cyrano's rapier by making a clumsy allusion to his nose. Cyrano shows him how much more wittily he could have insulted him. He then declares that he will improvise a Ballade, and fence with Valvert, "touching" him before the last verse. The rapiers are drawn, and Cyrano declaims during the sword-play. Each verse ends significantly with the words,

"A la fin d' l'envoi, je touche,"

and as Cyrano's wrist is as good as his word, Valvert is hit as the "envoi" is repeated. Congratulations are offered on all sides, a dramatic touch being the salute of a Mousquetaire, who proves to be our old friend d'Artagnan.

Hitherto all has been bustle, with a full stage, but with all the action there is scarcely a line without some subtle point. In little details Rostand excels, but much must be passed over here for the sake of clearness.

We now come to the period of pause in Act I, and Cyrano is left to explain the motive for his spite against Montfleury. It is that the actor has a trick of ogling the women in the audience, one in particular, Roxane namely, whom Cyrano loves. He realises, however, that "Ce nez qui d'un quart d'heure en tous lieux me précède" makes his conquest doubtful. At all

turns his nose cannot be forgotten—even the moonlight is treacherous when it casts the shadow of his profile on a wall, but he will not let the divine beauty of tears be sullied by contact with its ugliness. Cyrano the swaggerer is yielding for the moment to Cyrano the poet. He learns that Roxane followed the duel with great interest, and her Duenna now appears to fix an appointment with him at the pastrycook's. He is over-



M. Coquelin as "Cyrano de Bergerac.

whelmed with the thought that Roxane may care for him, and an outlet for his emotion is created by his going forth to fight "the hundred men" who are lying in wait at the Porte de Nesle to attack his comrade. With this the act closes. It is to be noted that Roxane has had

nothing to do but to utter a solitary cry during the duel. The construction of this act, however, is so strong that every incident is developed later on, and even though the artifice of getting rid of Christian at the beginning of the act, so that he may not be present at the duel or learn anything of Cyrano, seems somewhat forced, its significance is accentuated by the meeting of the two men in the next act.

We have now been introduced to all the characters of the story, and in Act II. we find ourselves at the pastrycook's shop. The comedy that follows can only be called dainty; it is full of exquisite touches of pathos The poetic cook has a practical wife, who has used his precious manuscripts for making paper bags—a custom not confined to the Paris of those days. Of course Ragueneau is at once called upon to wrap up some pâtés in them. One by one he takes up the bags, reads a few words, and puts them down in turn, till he is compelled to give up one with resignation. Another quaint touch is the gift to him of a lyre made of gingerbread by one of the apprentices.

Cyrano enters the shop to keep his appointment with Roxane. He has been wounded in the hand in his encounter at the Porte de Nesle, and he sits down to write a love-letter. Meanwhile, the hungry poets make their morning call upon Ragueneau, they pay him compliments which he repays by feeding them with cakes, reciting to them the recipe of a pudding which he has composed in the form of a Ballade. One poet exclaims as he bites a corner off it, "For the first time the Lyre feeds me."

Roxane appears and thanks Cyrano for disposing of Valvert in the duel; she hints to him that she is in love with someone in Cyrano's corps, whom he thinks may be himself until she says he is handsome, then he learns the truth, that Christian is the man. She asks him to watch over him and bid him write to her, and our hapless hero promises.

The corps of Cadets then arrives, and Cyrano is overwhelmed with their congratulations on his exploit of the previous evening. Not the least subtle touch is the request of Renaudot, the inventor of the Gazette, for an interview, which is, however, refused! De Guiche enters and congratulates Cyrano on his success in the duel. Finding himself in the midst of the corps, an extraordinary rabble, though they are all barons and very proud, he asks who these men are. replies in some stirring verses that "Ce sont les Cadets de Gascogne," a phrase which becomes a sort of leit-motif in the rest of the play. A moment later, however, de Guiche learns that it was Cyrano who put to rout the men he had posted at the Porte de Nesle, and departs in a Before he goes he offers to introduce Cyrano to his uncle, Cardinal Richelieu, but as that personage has a habit of correcting other people's verses he declines, preferring to remain unknown rather than have his work tampered with.

Christian is now taunted by his new comrades the Cadets, and to test his courage they bid him speak of Cyrano's nose, telling him of past encounters on the subject of this tender topic. begins to relate the fight at the Porte de Nesle when Christian interrupts him with an allusion to his nose. Cyrano is stupefied; the Cadets stand waiting for the blow, but on finding that it is Roxane's lover he masters his fury and goes on with Again and again Christian his story. breaks in in the same way, till Cyrano dismisses the crowd and faces his insulter. What follows shows the beautiful side of Cyrano's character. Instead of crushing Christian, he simply says, "Embrace me, I am her brother," not letting it be known that he too loves her passionately. "Whose brother?" asks Christian, learning for the first time that he is loved by Roxane and that she desires him to write to her. This he cannot do, for, lacking eloquence, he fears to disillusion her by having no fine phrases to offer her. Cyrano takes out the letter he wrote at the beginning of the act, and says that it will serve to send to Roxane; the Cadets return, and to their consternation find the two embracing and both alive. Cyrano for once has allowed the insult to pass, and the act ends.

The irony of the situation is intensified in the third act, which takes place before Roxane's house. Roxane reads to Cyrano the verses Christian has sent her, but as Cyrano wrote them himself with a full heart, he disguises his feelings by punctuating them with disdainful comments.

The dramatist's ingenuity is by no means exhausted, for he adds one fresh complication to the plot. Under orders to lead the Corps des Gardes to the siege of Arras, de Guiche comes to take leave of Roxane. She divines that this implies a parting with her lover, who must go with the Cadets, but knowing that de Guiche desires to be revenged on Cyrano, who is also in the Cadets, she suggests that nothing would spite our hero more than to be prevent-

ed from going wherever there was fighting. She therefore suggests that the Gardes should not be sent to the front. De Guiche grasps the idea, and she promises him an assignation later on, he, meanwhile, going into hiding at a Capuchin monastery.

Cyrano now leaves the field to Christian, but la Précieuse, instead of the flow of eloquence which his letters led her to

expect of him, hears nothing but his murmurs, "I love thee—I love thee." She is piqued, and goes into her house. Christian, in despair, calls on Cyrano to help him. It is dark, and when Roxane appears on the balcony, Cyrano, imitating Christian's voice, makes love to her. The



Mdlle. Legault as Roxane.

pathos of the scene is exquisite. Cyrano, carried away by his emotions, speaks passionately, laying bare his own heart, while Roxane thinks that it is Christian who is speaking. Poor Cyrano begins with a line which is the keynote of the play—"Moi, je ne suis qu'une ombre," and the reality of the unreality intensifies our sympathy towards "the shadow."

Christian, at length, unable to restrain

himself, interrupts by a request for a kiss. The demand is contrary to the rules of les Précieuses, but Cyrano has to plead the more for that which he will never receive. At length Roxane yields, and Christian ascends to the balcony.

Meanwhile, a Capuchin arrives on the scene, looking for Roxane's house. He bears to her a letter from de Guiche, telling her that he will come to her that night. Roxane reads this in a low voice, then, on pretence of repeating it aloud to the others, improvises a letter to the effect that the monk's mission is to wed her secretly and immediately to Christian. The three enter the house, and Cyrano is left to intercept de Guiche. This he does by feigning madness, until, deeming that the ceremony has been completed, he reveals himself. In fury at being outwitted, de Guiche orders Christian to join his regiment and set out for Arras, and the act ends by Cyrano promising Roxane to watch over her newly-wedded husband, and to make him write regularly to her. By this time the audience is well aware that it is Cyrano who will write all the letters she receives.

The fourth act takes place in the camp before Arras. Every night Cyrano fulfils his promise to Roxane, and writes to her in Christian's name, making his way through the enemy's lines to hand his letters over to a messenger. As the act opens he enters the scene challenged by the sentry, having accomplished this dangerous duty.

The Cadets are starving, but Cyrano encourages them by making jokes. It is arranged that an attack is to be made immediately, but as it is a dangerous enterprise, Christian regrets that he has not written a letter of farewell to Roxane. This has been foreseen by Cyrano, who hands him a letter drawn up to meet such a contingency.

A moment later Roxane herself appears, to the amazement of everyone. She comes in a carriage, with the solitary

pass-word "Je vais voir mon amant, a phrase which was sufficient to the enemy, who replied with a bow, "Passez, Señorita!" Was ever a dramatic difficulty overcome with such address? She is hailed with delight, and as her carriage cushions are stuffed with food, the Cadets adore her to the point of asking her for her handkerchief to serve as the flag for the company. Then she is invited to review the corps, and during her absence Cyrano begs Christian to keep silence regarding the authorship of the letters, saying that he was only interpreting his friend's passion, and that he had written many times without mentioning the fact. Cyrano confesses to Christian that he had written to Roxane oftener than he had acknowledged. In this way Christian discovers that Cyrano loves Roxane, and implores him to tell her, since she has iust said that she loves the great soul that wrote the letters. Reluctantly Cyrano promises, the assault begins, and Christian goes to his post. What ensues is another manifestation of the fate that dogs poor Cyrano. Expecting that he will be killed, he is about to disclose to Roxane his love for her, when Christian is brought in shot.

In the midst of the confusion the little lace handkerchief flutters at the point of a lance, and Cyrano rallies the men, but they are swept down, and the enemy appear. Saluting Cyrano, an officer, surprised at the small number of men who have been giving them fight, asks, "Quels sont ces gens qui se font tous tuer?" The answer comes back from Cyrano, "Ce sont les Cadets de Gascogne!" And as the battle wages the curtain descends.

It is fifteen years later, with the dead leaves of autumn falling every now and then from the trees of a convent garden. Roxane has gone to live with the nuns, and is visited weekly by Cyrano, but for the first time in all these years he fails to keep the accustomed appointment. It

is explained that while he was passing along a street a servant let fall out of a window a block of wood, which caused a severe wound on his head. The dead leaves rustle down on Roxane's embroidery frame as she wonders why Cyrano is late. When he appears he is pale, with his hat well over his eyes to conceal his bandages. Weak as he is, the jest is not dead in him, and he tells Roxane all the gossip. But he faints, blaming the wound he received at Arras, but, "Cela va finir—c'est fini," he says, with an attempt at a smile.

Roxane, too, has her wound in her heart, over which lies Christian's last letter to her, stained with blood, yellow with time. Cyrano reminds her that once she said he might read it, and she gives it to him. He begins, aloud, "Roxane, adieu, je vais mourir;" and, as he goes on, she is struck with the tone of his voice, then with the fact that it is too dark to see the words, and at length the truth bursts upon her.

"Et pendant quatorze ans, il a joué ce rôle D'être le vieil ami qui vient pour être drôle!"

He protests that he never wrote the letter; she insists,

"La voix dans la nuit, c'était vous . . . 'âme, c'était la vôtre . . . vous m'aimiez . . . Ah! que de choses qui sont mortes . . . qui sont nées!"

She then sees that Cyrano is gravely ill, about to die, but not the death in war that he coveted.

"J'aurai tout manqué... même ma mort," a line which is his fitting epitaph. His spirit is rapidly passing away, but suddenly the old cry comes to his lips, "Ce sont les Cadets de Gascogne," he draws his sword, and, brandishing it as it were at Death, cries, "Qu'elle ose regarder mon nez!" and, with a last taunt,

flung at his old foes "Le Mensonge, les Préjugés, les Lâchetés, la Sottise," this most loveable soldier of fortune dies.

Such, then, is the play. Many a Cyrano has lived, and fought, and rhymed, and died, forgotten, manqué. It has been M. Rostand's good fortune to sublimate the sweet human qualities of them all, to immortalise the heroism and supreme generosity of many a keen blade and true lover, and show us a character which is all too rare on the stage nowadays. Cyrano was one who sketched his life on the grand scale, his joys were colossal, so also were his griefs, and while the world jested at the buffets of war and love which bruised this big souled creature, none but himself knew his sufferings.

In the golden legend of Saints and such worthies there are but few whose histories interest us; man's mind, however, has created two, Don Quixote and Cyrano de Bergerac, fine types of men among mankind, good lovers, good haters, quick in offence, gentle in preferring others to themselves. These, models of lives well spent even in their misfortunes, will endure, waging their eternal war against "La Sottise." The type of Cyrano belongs to all ages, and this spadassin and soldier of fortune is as real to-day as he was in the times of Louis XIII.

The play is fortunate in being now in Sir Henry Irving's hands, and it will be left to him to emphasize points which Coquelin, in spite of all his art, has missed. A great personality is demanded in such a part, a personality which Coquelin is not endowed with so as to play heroic rôles, and we feel that the text, with its beautiful touches of pathos and comedy, will be treated reverently by Sir Henry.



THE DIPPER'S HAUNT.

THE IDLER OUT OF DOORS.

IN PRAISE OF IDLING AND RAPID STREAMS.

BY WALTER RAYMOND.

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR W. ROUSE.



AM an Idler—the most thorough and complete that ever went in debt for shoes to plod a vagrant journey through these three score years and ten.

To plod - did

I say? I have never plodded—never will plod. I will follow where the whim leads, like the thistle down when the wind blows. Where grass waves green, far from the dusty road; where the sparkling river dashes against boulders and dances between rocks in mad haste and passion to find the deep blue sea; where glossy beech trees spread across the woodland path to dapple bracken with a summer-mottled shade—these are the quiet haunts for my money—or even for an occasional temporary deficiency of ready cash.

The blessing of idleness came to me as a birthright, and I have held to it in spite of all the world's temptations.

The shining example of finest-quality, steam-rolled, double-twilled men of business, amidst whom my youth was spent, never once led me astray, nor induced me to dissipate in an orgy of money-making that energy for Idling which was Nature's choicest gift. Precept, thank God! has been of no more avail than water on a duck's back. No, no! All this absurd talk about making your way in life never took me in. Why make your way? There are thousands of ways already. Enough to distract any

man but an Idler, and drive him off his head.

I have a relative who has made his way in a manner to make your mouth water.

A poor boy, but singularly honest, with eyes as frank as daylight, and apple cheeks as rosy as dawn, he left the verdant simplicity of our country-side and went into hides.

By early middle life he became a genius in hides.

Now there is nothing revealed to man, nothing known upon earth or elsewhere, about hides that he could not tell—only he is reticent on the subject and will not. For every minute of the day he shouts down a telephone to buy, except when he shouts down to sell; and when you come to that pass, hides are a deal too holy to tell the whole truth about.

During a quarter of a century and more all his waking hours have been spent in an office in Tooley Street, about the size of a rabbit's hutch, in an atmosphere redolent of the richest hides, until both his beauty and sense of beauty have followed his example and gone into hides.

"A fine hide! Grand hide!"

As he says it, the white of his eye turns up yellow as a guinea, and his cheek is the colour of law calf. Ha! he laughs when he pictures our village now; though the thought of my idleness brings on a fit. But then he is so busy. He has not even leisure to note the sunlight shining aslant to silver the cobweb in the corner pane of his office window.

I would rather feel the crisp turf underfoot, and see the blue sky overhead, than

spend my days within four walls to earn the fee-simple of the earth. What can it matter who has it, if only you have health and eyes to look? And if you do not look now, in the daylight of Life—you are gone.

To the soul that sees it truly, is wanted no better world than this. And for your true, philosophical, out-of-door vagabond, there can be no paradise sweeter than Somersetshire. Here is a little of everything, and an air of being far away hangs There are broad, level moors, over all. which once were meres, and a tract of upland moor, heather-clad and gorsecovered, which gets its name from the Saxon word for waste. There is a mountain-limestone range with grey rocks, lofty cliffs, and deep, water-wrought caves, walled, pillared, and pinnacled, like chambers in a palace of alabaster. Woodlands and gentle pastures slope towards the south, where lazy kine eat cowslips and grow Orchards, white as snow in early June, chequer the hillsides. square fields of grass, broad grounds of waving wheat grow ruddy-golden in the August sun.

For all these, some say, they called it the land of summer long ago.

Every spot is haunted by a spirit of legend and romance.

Arthur and Alfred both were here, the one at Camelot, the other at Athelney. And every mile or so, as you trudge along the road, there is the ruin of an ancient abbey, with Gothic windows, and ivy creeping over buttress and wall. It may be a mansion now; but ten to one it is a homestead, with a barton full of ricks and golden stacks. There, if arch or oriel chance to catch your eye and make you loiter, sure as the light, the good-man will be out to door to ask you in. They are a good sort, and dearly love an Idler in these parts.

But all this is mere preamble and by the way. The spring is come. Birds are swelling upon branch and bough. Prim-

roses are plentiful in the lew of the wood, and peeping here and there on every wayside bank. Down in the meads Lent-lilies are in full bloom; along the hedgerow, between the yellow catkins, shivering in the wind on shining hazel twigs, the tiny flowers, that shall grow to clustering nuts, gleam in the glistening sunlight, red as blood. The birds that stay with us are busy, fighting, mating, chasing one another from briar to bramble, and in and out the bushes all along the lane. morn the blackbird from the dusky orchard pipes, all day the chaffinch pinks and ox eye scrapes his saw, till in the quiet eventide the thrush alone sings from the tall elm-top that draws, as black as ink, its tracery of naked limbs and leafless twigs upon the golden splendour of the sinking sun.

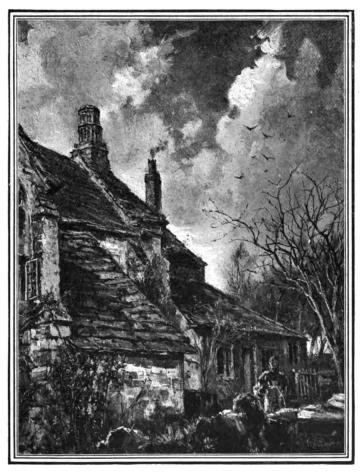
Now is the time to seek the riverside. The rapid moorland streams are open since the first of March, a month before the smoother waters upon the gravel and the chalk. The plucky little speckled trout, monsters of six inches up to half a pound, are bright in colour and quite ready to sport; but more than half the charm of angling is in the place.

The Exe and Barle are two of the brightest, merriest rivers that ever babbled over stones. Across the moor and down the glens between the hills they rush, sometimes hidden by overhanging ash and oak, sometimes flashing and gleaming in the light, but always singing in their headlong haste to meet each other, and run on together hand in hand. Alike as twin sisters, clad in frocks from the same piece, I could never feel quite certain which to love the most. Happy with both, I can be quite happy with either any day of the spring.

They are idlers too, wayward and uncertain, and never to be tamed.

From source to mouth, from start to finish, the giddy Barle will bear no burden and turn no wheel. Innocent of boats and mills, she gallops all the way her hoofs rattling against the stones, her white mane flying as she leaps the boulders—a frightened, uncaught filly never broken to the bit. Yet, though wildness be her chief charm, oftentimes she can be gentle too.

and russet in the shadow, but where the sunlight falls bright red. How they rustle in the winds of March, and fall and hurry, whirling down the stream. Once in many years the young oak trees are cut and stripped, and all the air is fresh with the



A homestead with a barton full of ricks.

There is a nook to which I go year after year when spring is young and sweet.

Every rock and stone, every bend and eddy, every aspect of the brown wood, slanting down a hillside steeper than any roof, is known to me by heart. The undergrowth of young oak still wears a winter clothing of last year's dead leaves, brown

clean smell of bark. But then they grow again just as before.

Over-right the wood lies a flat ham, a piece of level pasture, green and wet from the freshet that came down last week. Close to the bank, greener than anything, is a bog. It is better to step into the water and wade upon the stony river-bed past that.

Nothing has altered since last year. Nothing has changed—nor even will for Earlier or later, as the wind me. breathes softly or blows cold, the seasons follow, and a like pageant passes by. Now and again a form is lost, a bird or animal, common some time ago, becomes rare, and then is gone; but a lifetime reveals nothing new-never startles with a novelty or astonishes with a sudden strange invention. And yet the woods, the sky, and rushing water do not weary. For Nature only and the very finest art can be eternal. They hold the secret, and keep for ever fresh.

But this is idle talk, and waste of time and breath. By rapid streams we do not sit down and watch for fish to rise. In the fierceness of the torrent flies suffer shipwreck and are drowned, and the trout take them under water as they are carried along in the swirl.

Put on two flies, a cunning little blue upright for certain, and try a March-brown for a dropper. Choose the smallest you have, for to-day the river is low, and clear as gin; but if there had been half a flood, you might better use them big. Wade slowly in and have a care where you are going. The current rushing between stones is strong enough to wash you off your legs, but where you see small gravel you can always keep your feet.

Straight in front stands a smooth, grey boulder, dark in patches, and bright with lichen too. Under overarching trees it lies, big and solemn as the tomb of an Archbishop in a cathedral aisle. lightly just below the stone, where a triangle of quieter water shimmers black and white in the space before the foaming eddies meet. A trout is watching, and will surely come. Put him in your creel and push on up-stream. Above the boulder may be a long, straight pool, deep at the top and swiftly smooth towards the tail. Perhaps you can only reach the best of it from the bank with ten or a dozen yards of line; but keep back out of sight, for the place is full of fish, and they are quick to see. They will go into the fiercer stickles later in the year.

Sometimes as your flies pitch, trout will leap over them a foot or higher into the air. Then if your fly be big put on a smaller. But mostly there is little good in changing. They are only at play. Rain is coming with expectation of plenty, and the little rascals know it and will not feed. This is the idle time to sit down and look about and listen. The folk of Exmoor say you can hear the river crying for the storm.

There is a sound difficult to describe, but once heard never to be forgotten. A melancholy note, half-cry, half-whistle, far up in the blue sky. Above the loftiest crag of all the hills, soaring in circles, are a pair of buzzards. Higher and higher, round and round they sail, the light catching the underside of their broad outspread wings as they slant and turn. Noble as eagles in their flight, they rise to an immense height, and yet you can see the markings of their plumage from below. They have mated already, and, doubtless, built their nest upon the peak, or in the forked branches of the topmost tree. Good luck to them. moors will have lost something when buzzards are extinct.

There is another bird worth watching, if you love the things of open air.

In every moorland stream the dipper is as common as the blackbird in your kitchen garden. In his white waistcoat, he loves to perch mid-river on a great stone and perk his short tail up behind. When you come, he dives, or darts away like a kingfisher. Close by, where a brooklet leaps in cascades down the hillside to join the river, is an old stone bridge. Under that he loves to make his domed nest of moss, with a hole for a doorway just big enough for himself and his wife. Or he will build right behind the cascade, and dash to and fro through the falling water as if in sport.

At mid-day, when the sun is at his height, flies hatch and then the trout will feed. In the still pool you hear a splash—then another—then two; and presently the face of the water is covered with widening circles that overlap each other as they melt away. This is the time to fill your creel, but not a minute must be

wasted, for in the early season the rise will not last long. You can catch a couple of dozen in the half hour, if you are very quick and neat. Then in the early hours of afternoon there is leisure to idle again - to watch the squirrels leap from branch to branch and hear the nuthatch whistle to the spring. Just towards evening, when the light is low and golden in the rift



The Thrush.

between the hills, there is often again a brisk ten minutes. When they stop this time, you may as well take the rough footpath by the riverside, and, through the deepening gloom of the mysterious wood, the constant hum of running water in your ears, trudge home to dine.

To me all rivers have a character—a personality and individuality, so that they seem to live. They talk not words, but music wild or sweet; and hold one

captive all the more with truth and beauty I can neither grasp nor understand.

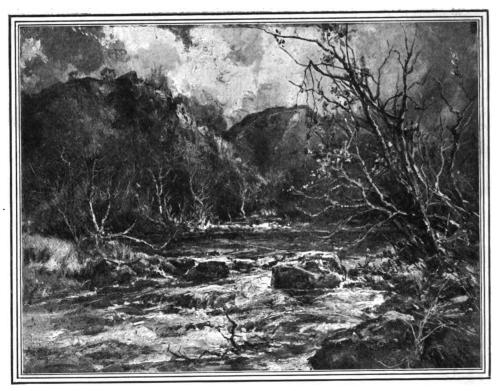
There is declamation in the flood a whispered lullaby in the shallow lapping over summer stones. But the brook that runs hard by our village is a tripping melody in six-eight time.

> In and out it winds, past the cottage garden by the bridge, round the orchard, and along the mead, widening to the pool above the mill, and then, straight as an arrow, flying away between high banks with pollard willows leaning from each side.

It is so narrow you can step across it twenty places in one field; yet there are trout, and, if not many, some are big

and well-to-do. You must find an open place to drop a hare's-flax fly between the alders and the withy tree. Just above the round sheep-wash, with its mossy stones and bright green ferns growing out of the chinks, you are sure to catch a fish at once—and then another, if in half an hour you come back.

There are no dippers here; but, now and then, in the early morning, a heron rises from the water-meadow when you



Bears no burden and turns no wheel.

flies away. Ten to one a moor-hen has her nest in the rushes just below the hatch. Last year a dabchick built, midstream, her floating cradle, and hid her eggs with weed.

Happy glistening little brook! Picture

come, spreads his broad grey wings and of smiling gaiety and contentment! The meadows are green because you flood them well; and always to your leaping little song the mill-wheel murmurs sweet accompaniment.

Happy little brook! To look so idle, yet to do so much!

IDLERS' THE CLUB.

IS BOHEMIANISM EXTINCT?

BY JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P., MAX PEMBERTON, ALLEN UPWARD, COULSON KERNAHAN, ARNOLD GOLSWORTHY, MISS MABEL BEARDSLEY, AND ARTHUR LAWRENCE.

Not if I know it; at least, what I

understand as Bohemia is not extinct, and is not likely to be. "I have lost the way to Bohemia," says Thackeray, in a bright and yet melancholy passage, "but it is certain that Prague is the most picturesque city in the world." Well, I know Prague, and I have lived in Bohemia, and I am sure there is a Bohemia still, although I, perhaps, have lost my way to it. The Bohemia of Henri Mürger is gone indeed. I do not know whether it has any better representatives in Paris to-day than are to be found in the companions of the Chat Noir, or whatever has taken its place; but I am sure that there is still a Bohemia of some kind existing in Paris still, although Henri Mürger is Mürger's Bohemia was made up of art, poverty, recklessness, debt, drink, and dissipation. "Bohemia," said Mürger himself, in his latest words to Edmund About, "is not an institution, but a malady, and I am dying of it." But the debt and the dissipation and the sponging for money which came to be main conditions of that Bohemia are not necessary to every Bohemia. What are the principles on which Bohemia exists? It must be a community of artists to begin with, men and women who compose poems and music, who write books, who write for journals, who paint picures, who love art of every kind, who are bound together by the companionship of artistic feeling, and who do not go in for the making of money above all things, who refuse to worship money, and who do not crave and will not beg and fawn for admission to the society of titled personages. The titled personages are free to visit Bohemia, and are made welcome there when they show that they have something of the brotherhood's sentiment in them. One of the most brilliant

I remember a delightful Bohemia that existed years and years ago, and had Fitzroy Square for its centre; a Bohemia of painters and sculptors and authors, young and old, of young poets and poetesses, of scholars who were not pedantic, of actors who afterwards became famous, of travellers and explorers, of public men who well understood that life had something to enjoy outside the precincts of the House of Commons. I am afraid that particular Bohemia has long since become tenant-Some of its members died old and famous; some died young and on the verge of fame; many have migrated to the West End; some have become Cabinet Ministers; but going over the names as well as my memory will allow me, I cannot say that any one of them has gone in for the mere making or the mere worship of money. I should be sorry to think that such a Bohemia does not still exist in every city where men and women really love art, and delight in the kinship and the companionship of the artistic. So long as such men and women still live—and what on earth has happened to us that such men and women should not live?—the true

Bohemians I, at least, ever met, was the late Prince Napoleon, the cousin of Napoleon III. But Bohemia will not go out of its way to hunt out princes, or to get invitations to the dinner-parties, or the garden-parties, or the crowded at-homes of princes and nobles, although willing enough to take part in such festivities if made

Bohemia, the best Bohemia, must always exist.

Is Bohemia extinct?

welcome on equal terms.

Justin McCarthy

The answer depends so much upon what is meant by Max Pemberton Bohemianism? If we are to understand that it is the creed of the clay pipe and the quart-pot, then I would say that it is as dead changed. as Queen Anne. We believe in that creed no more. We have even come to think that a man may be a poet, and yet visit the barber. Intoxication is no longer good evidence of an ability to write leading articles or to discourse learnedly of the politics of Europe. Editors of to-day do not assume that a man with a rubicund jowl, and a fine discernment in Scotch whisky, is, ipso facto, a better writer than his neighbour who has never tasted whisky in his life, and is not sure that he does not prefer his champagne sweet. These things were all the qualities of the so-called Bohemianism of a dead generation—a Bohemianism which found the very salt of life in a profession of impecuniosity and an ability to render, with variations, the tenor part of a public-house ballad. I remember once being told by the member of a Bohemian club in London, that any man there who possessed ten pounds was looked upon with suspicion. To-day, I take it, his character would no longer be questioned in that very club even if he possessed ten times the sum. The truth of all Bohemianism, perhaps, lies in a higher and better understanding of the creed which many proclaim so falsely. It is a spirit which animated Mürger, when he wrote the unsurpassable Vie de Bohème. Marcel, Rudolphe, Schaunard, Musette, and Mimi are for us, not so much creations, as echoes of a voice which every Bohemian must hear sometimes in his life. We may call it what we please the brotherhood of art, the charity of art, the fellowship of the years of failure, it means in the end the one truth—that our life teaches us to value the man for himself, and not for the accidents of purse and of position. Such a Bohemianism is as old as art itself. It is found, as Mürger has told us, neither in this city nor in that, in this age nor the other. It exists everywhere. It is the property of rich and poor, of It is a bond which binds more closely than vows. success and of failure. existence, indisputable and infinite, must for ever forbid us to say that Bohemianism is dead, or is even in danger. None the less may we hasten to give a decent burial to many of those absurdities which are practised nowadays in the name of the sacred Sham and paltry orgies, the clank of glasses, the fumes of bad tobacco, have no more to do with the "town on the sea-shore," than they have with the A laudible desire to be even as other men, to wear clean collars and to shave, does not any longer deprive a man of the name of Bohemian. We are weary, as Mr. Zangwill has told us, of the humour of the public-house and the pawnshop. Literature and art attract to themselves men who are clothed and in their right mind. There is hot and cold water in Grub Street—and, appalling heresy, we have forgotten the very ballads which our literary forefathers roared so loudly, and often, I fear, so incoherently. Bohemianism has survived these and their music; it will survive even the latter-day eccentricities which flourish in the shadow of its name.

No, I am not extinct, but I sometimes fear that all the other Allen Upward Bohemians are. In my opinion Bohemianism has been killed by is not extinct that inrush of wealth upon the literary profession over which Sir but lonely. Walter Besant is always chortling, but which I regard with undisguised aversion and regret. My own existence is one long struggle between Bohemian instincts and an excessive income. Were my earnings only ten shillings a week I could spend my days in a gipsy van, and my nights in a hayloft, without exciting remark. As things are, I dare not even travel third-class, or put up at a temperance hotel, for fear of being regarded as an eccentric and dangerous character. In London (with one exception) authors are fast becoming recognised as the most respectable class of the community, and an author is preferred, as a reference, to a clergyman or banker. In the provinces the Bohemian tradition dies hard. Landladies are still chary of letting their lodgings to an actor-but then we have Mr. Clement Scott's word for it that Bohemianism is not extinct behind the footlights. My own relatives do not conceal from me that they regard my excursions into literature as a social fall; but then I never was proud.

Robert Louis Stevenson always seemed to me the ideal Bohemian. His soul and a suburban villa had nothing akin. He tells us himself that his very countenance inspired distrust. I could relate a parallel experience. Though I am a far more respectable person than Stevenson ever was, there appears to be a very curious belief on the part of the shopkeeping classes of this country that I am a deeply dishonest man. It is in vain that I pay their bills with trembling haste time after time, that I keep up the outward semblance of prosperity, that I live within my income, invest my savings, and eschew extravagant ways. It is in vain that my banker extols me, my landlord approves of me, and my housekeeper confides in me as in the Bank of England. tradesmen are not to be thus appeased. Their deep-rooted suspicions are not to be so lightly laid to sleep. Though I never gamble, though I am a lifelong teetotaller and non-smoker, though I wear respectable clothes, and seldom indulge in real crime, yet there is that about me which convinces these persons that I am not the stuff of which churchwardens are made. The very tailor who makes those clothes measures me with mistrust, sews them with misgiving, sends them to me with pain, and instantly follows them up with his account, offering me the enormous discount of 15 per cent. for cash. It is useless for me to try and win the good opinion of these men. I feel it is in vain that I take the opportunity—as I now do—to assure publicly my tradesmen that I have not the remotest intention of defrauding them.

I feel it is impossible that so firm a conviction should be quite baseless. Doubtless I am destined, sooner or later, to do some dark deed of dishonesty, even though it be against my interest and against my natural inclination. It is in vain that I bask in the sun of respectability, and add gold-mine to gold-mine. Some day the lurking taint will break out; in one mad moment I shall undo the work of years; I shall put all my possessions into a small black bag, borrow millions of money, and skip to Argentina—from which country, I believe, you cannot be extradited as long as there

is a shot in the locker. Those who live will see.

The other day I was in need of a necktie, so I entered a haberdasher's shop and made known my want.

"Yes, sir," said the salesman, jerking out a glass-lidded box upon the counter as deftly as a drill-sergeant handling his stick. "The very thing, sir. Just out, sir. Same as you see there in the window, labelled 'The New Tie for '98.'"

Mr. Coulson Kernahan suggests rejuvenation.

"Yes, that will do," I answered. "But it isn't new. I've worn that make of tie for years, and always come here to get it, because you always keep it in the place."

"So you do, sir, to be sure," said the man, conceding the point gracefully. "Now I come to look at you, I remember serving you myself very well. Of course, of course. But the fact is "—this in a lowered tone of voice and with insinuating confidence—"the fact is, sir, that we have found that tie hang a bit lately." He grew apologetic, perhaps, in consideration for my wounded feelings as a leader of fashion. "And when we find any article hang a bit, sir, we label it 'The New This' or 'The New That,' and stick it in the window, and then, sir" (he brightened up to briskness, and rubbed his hands with congratulatory self-satisfaction) "then, sir, we find it goes off bea—u—tifully."

Isn't that true outside shopkeeping? Are not the "New Humour," the "New Journalism," and all the other "News" that the waning century is heir to, very like old goods with fresh labels? And isn't it time that someone performed a similar kind office for languishing Bohemianism?

Where is Mr. Douglas Sladen? He who hath gotten such great victories for the Vagabond Club? There were not fifteen of us, all told, when that doughty champion came to our rescue, dubbed us "The New Vagabonds," stuck us in the window—a front place too,—and turned our fifteen members into five hundred.

Bohemianism is not dead. The old Bohemianism, pictured by Thackeray, is fast disappearing. We boast one or two survivals—our good friend Odell, for instance—at the Savage Club, but the Bohemianism which accounted brains and good fellowship greater righteousness to a man than a title or a town-house, is distinctly languishing in '98, when money more than anything rules the roost. All the same, though afternoon tea is sipped by tall-hatted, frock-coated actors, artists, and literary men where very different orgies were once held, I refuse to believe that the Bohemian spirit is dead. All it wants is rejuvenating. Wherefore, I say again, "Where is Mr. Douglas Sladen?"

Arnold Golsworthy thinks it is more flourishing than ever. In former days Bohemianism was generally associated with a consistent neglect of the finger-nails, coupled with a yearning for a higher life of beer; but, like Mr. Chamberlain's political creed, it has always shown a pleasing readiness to adapt itself to the modern market. This old style of Bohemianism, which is the only kind

some people know, is, so far as its social influence is concerned, deader than the dodo. And, as one who would have been emphatically denied admission to its charmed circle on account of a Philistine predilection for occasionally wearing a clean collar, I do not weep over its sepulchre. Modern Bohemianism consists, to some extent, in nourishing a withering contempt for the conventions of a class of society which one has endeavoured without success to invade; but it is for the most part the expression of a wholesome desire to live a more manly and more womanly life. This last I desire to insist on gracefully. Like the enterprising grocer's least offensive eggs, it is our leading feature. And so far from this kind of Bohemianism being extinct, I venture to say that it is only just about to come into its kingdom. What makes me most certain of this fact is that I am myself a Bohemian from the rind to the core. You may have noticed that the usual method by which the average man determines the existence, or otherwise, of a particular influence is by testing it in the light of his own experience, and stubbornly ignoring all the counter-arguments. For instance, I have a friend who is convinced that the Daily News must have an absolutely colossal circulation because he has bought it regularly for years; while, on the other hand, he doubts very much whether the Daily Telegraph can be even paying expenses, because he never looks at a copy of it. The average newspaper politician would as soon think of reading up the other side of the question as of doubting his own sanity. And this must be my excuse for adopting a form of argument which is likely to have the longest reach. It has been charged against Bohemianism that it offers no encouragement to the performance of the duties of citizenship, but this is only cheap calumny—that abuse of the defendant which proverbially reveals the weakness of the plaintiff's case. I am ready to admit that I have never voted on public matters, myself; but at the call of duty I could not only claim one vote of my own, but could influence by threats of personal violence at least five more. Thus, I regard Bohemianism as not only alive, but as a power to reckon with. There are, I know, many so-called Bohemians, who attempt to act up to their conscientious convictions, and, at the same time, to dally with the evening shirt-front and shoulder-blade policy of Grosvenor Square. But these, like active volcanoes, contain within themselves the elements of their own destruction, and are bound, sooner or later, to be absorbed into the vortex of suburban and respectability, from which there is no escape except along the pathway of crime. I have many friends who, on the slightest persuasion, can be induced to say harsh things of me, but I do not think my worst enemy in his most vengeful mood would be base enough to allege that I have ever been respectable. A misguided critic once charged me with having worn a gold stud in public, but I was able to defend myself from this bitterly cruel assertion, proving conclusively that the stud was only a plated one, by triumphantly calling attention to the fact that the gold stuff had worn off at the edges, thus unmistakeably displaying the tin underwear beneath. As to my having once been seen wearing patent leather boots in public, I admit it. My excuse, however, for this retrogression is that I was very poor at the time, and

was on my way to my tailors to get another suit of clothes and another dose of credit on the strength of an appearance that spoke louder than words. I trust I have now made it clear that Bohemianism is most certainly not extinct. I know I meant to do so anyhow, when I began this paragraph, and if I have failed it is because my ink has gone thick.

With Henri Mürger I am inclined to insist that true Bohemianism is only to be found in Paris; that there is as great a difference between the inhabitants of the Quartier Latin and the dwellers, say, in Ravenscourt Park or Kensington (I speak under correction, for Bohemianism is hard to locate) as between the

Miss Mabel Beardsley thinks there is no need for anxiety.

Romanies of Hungary and the gipsies of Epsom Downs. The Bohemians of London are, as a rule, more remarkable for freedom of manner and costume than for the wild untameable spirit of genius which is usually supposed to justify eccentric behaviour and aloofness from Society. Bohemianism (so-called) will not become extinct in England for lack of professors; it is too useful an apology, too picturesque a pose.

Round the tattered, smoke-begrimed banner of Bohemia swarm the lazy, the perverse, the incompetent, the aimless, claiming kinship with true artists, and enjoying the privileges which a brilliant few secure for their fellow-countrymen. The neglectful indifference with which Parisian Society treats artists and literati (with a few exceptions) justifies their attitude of defiance, and stings them to a lofty assertion of rights and privileges which Society cannot touch, and the proclamation, sometimes unnecessarily noisy, of their freedom from the laws and conventions of a system which does not recognise the aristocracy of genius. But in England there is no such excuse for a republic of letters, an artistic Cave of Adullam. Society is hardly less eager to throw open its doors to art than art can be to enter them. And with all tolerance and indulgence, too. A collection of artistic lions, preferably as varied as possible, is one of the chief ambitions of a really successful hostess.

And yet there are always enough outlaws, voluntary or involuntary, to fill the salons of Bohemia to overflowing. A tendency to foregather is a marked characteristic of English Bohemians, and at the "At-homes" given by the socially ambitious among their women one may observe and admire, if so inclined, the curious and wonderful producers of impressionist sketches, neurotic poetry, and realistic short stories. In spirit and intention these at-homes differ very little from those of Philistine hostesses.

The conversation is not so bewilderingly intellectual as one might fearfully anticipate, and the costumes of the women, if not of the men, are, so far as one can see through clouds of tobacco-smoke, more or less regulated by fashion.

The decadents of Paris, who in scanty twos and threes mutually confide the treasures of their mystic poesy in a mysterious mansard, would find little nourishment for their souls or inspiration for their work at the gatherings of English Bohemia.

For the artist who can achieve his ideal, who is capable of realisation and accomplishment, Bohemia is only a trial-ground, the land of his dreams, the school of his endeavour. However valuable to an artist the sympathy and advice of his fellow-artists may be, the constant intercourse with men who are doing similar work, and the continual employ of literary, artistic, and theatrical argot, tend to narrow the mental outlook and to conventionalise production. This is the true reason why Bohemianism with its jargon, its poses, its indiscretions, has no attraction for certain temperaments. There will always be dwellers apart, souls impatient of constraint, solitary pursuers of their ambitions. Because they are not of the world, it may call them Bohemians if it will. They themselves care little for a name which has become associated with the dubitably artistic and the questionably literary.

Again, Bohemia has to mourn the loss of those artists who, having tasted the delights of social success, are beginning to appreciate the real beauty of conventionality and the dignity of social obedience.

The latest apostle of decadent literature is also the delight of his tailor, his boots are as carefully polished as his wit, his coat is exquisitely designed and finished as his prose style, the lines of his trousers flow no less harmoniously than the cadence of his verse. He changes his button-hole three times a day. The glass over his mantelpiece is framed in "at-home" cards, and of a June evening he has rarely less than three dances which he attends in orthodox evening dress rather than in black velvet or in tweed.

And, moreover, his work, when he has time to do it, shows that art can survive even the most favourable social conditions.

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Arthur Lawrence hopes not.

It would seem to be necessary to view the body before one can be called upon to declare life extinct. Bohemianism, unlike most "isms," seems to admit of nothing in the way of precise definition.

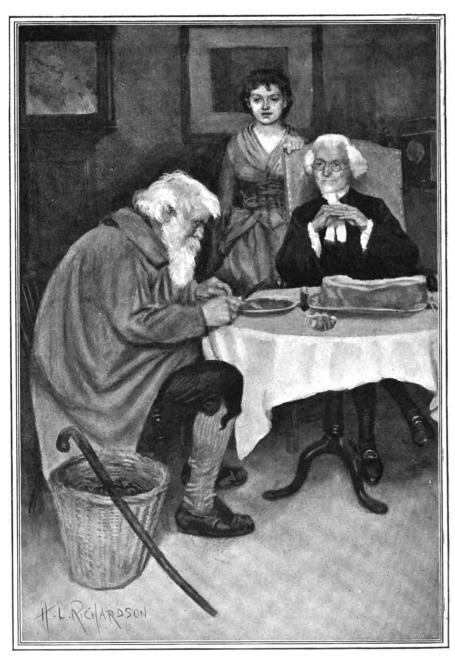
I presume, however, that there is a degraded Bohemia and an exalted Bohemia, and that there are varying highlands and lowlands of that beautiful shadowland, just as there are "sets" amongst titled and untitled personages, gradations of "tone" in the different suburbs, and sharp distinctions amongst the active—and retired—shopkeeping element.

From the lips of a charming woman, whose eyes may, perhaps, convey more than is implied in her speech, it may happen that one may feel overpoweringly flattered and indescribably elated by the fact that she has described you as a Bohemian—perhaps she has said "a delightful Bohemian!" But when the term—I had almost said epithet—is applied to you by a man whom you know to be enjoying all the luxuries which almost unlimited wealth can afford, you feel inclined to revenge yourself by inviting him to dinner, just to show what can be done by a mere paltry Bohemian. It is so rude of him.

When I have had time to worry about it, I have sometimes thought myself a Bohemian in my own small, pottering way, but I rather resent having the term applied to me merely because I live in an attic and subsist mainly on potatoes and salt.

Again, I find that some people lay claim to the title by reason of their fondness for the other sex, and an insistence on a fairly regular supply of small drinks. I sympathise with these men very strongly, but only because I know I am unable to rise superior to most human weaknesses. Furthermore, I have heard so much at one time and another of the Bohemian life of the Quartier Latin from people who have lived in Paris from three days to thirty years that I have almost come to believe that most of my own time has been spent there, and I have always a fairly capacious ear ready for the story of the man who tells me that he has studied and painted there, who has scarcely been able to pay the rent of his rooms or his studio, who has alternated between the choicest cuisine and the most inadequate diet, who has borrowed money and lent it, when he has had any to lend, who has starved—and done many other things there! But I have a notion that he likes his Bohemia best at a distance, his pretty little stories are recounted amidst the Philistinism of the Eccentric or Savage Clubs, and his obvious intention in London is to become rich and intensely respectable. In the direction of sex and strong drinks the Greeks and Romans were just as Bohemian, perhaps more so, and I feel certain that the Bohemianism of the Stone Age must have been a very fine thing indeed.

But if I am unable to locate the land of Bohemia, I have certainly met many men and women whom I would dignify with the name of Bohemian. They are all charming, optimistic—no true Bohemian is otherwise—and youthful. Not necessarily young in years, which may be threescore or more, but—this is a great secret—the true Bohemian never grows old.

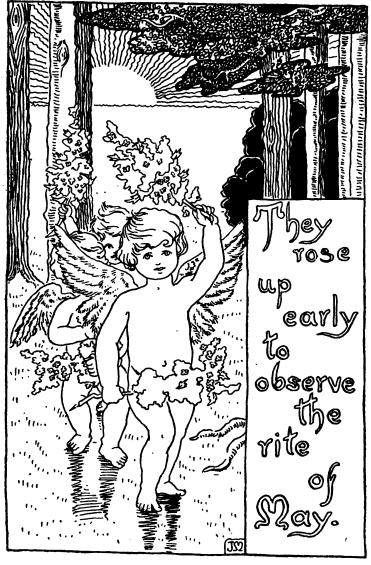


"The long-remembered beggar was his guest."

—The Deserted Village.

Drawn by H. L. Richardson.

THE JDLER



MAY



Upon its crest it bears no bush.

THE IDLER OUT OF DOORS.

A BIT OF ANCIENT BRITAIN.

BY WALTER RAYMOND.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. ARTHUR ROUSE.

BEHIND the hills of Montacute—in shape like sugar-cones, but covered dark in stately, glossy beech, and crowned with ragged firs that stand red-limbed in light or black against the sky—a long grey promontory juts out into the vale.

Upon its crest it bears no bush. No belt of woods encircles its steep side. Rising bare and stern above their heads it dwarfs the hedgerow elms and oaks that stand around its base, and, never changing as the seasons pass, looks down in cold disdain upon the rich and fertile plain below.

The glistening furrow turns and reddens 'neath the plough. The orchards silver at the end of May. The timber, clothed in densest summer green, blots out the croft, and makes a forest of the fields. The elm tree's top grows yellow at the fall, and soon the winter flood lies on the moor. But not the passion of the livelong year, from earliest bud to autumn's

brown decay, can change the aspect of those ancient mounds.

The fact is, Hamdon Hill has seen too much, and lived too long ago.

Viewed from a distance, in the landscape you would never dream this place to be so full of interest and delight. The fine-cropped turf, in summer slippery dry. gives scarce a foothold, but a climb up the steep side over the deep intrenchment will be well repaid. At the northwest point the rampart rises somewhat above the rest. There you may sit upon a ridge of grass as close as carpet, and footworn stones as smooth as many a cottage floor, and spend an hour in excellent idleness, in these days of haste, of far more worth than work. The richest and the best of Somersetshire spreads all in sight. From this height you can look down upon the country and read it like a map.

Half hidden in grey smoke the village of Stoke-sub-Hamdon nestles just below.

A busy little place that grows and grows whilst many a neighbour dwindles less. Square modern factories for the making of gloves hobnob, cheek and jowl, with ancient arches and thatched gables of a quaint old world. You can see the present pushing out the past. Near by the

which stands below wood some half-mile from the town, a fine old homestead smiles content.with lilac bushes at the hatch, and pear trees trained upon the from front ground to thatch. Yet iust beyond the garden wall another. with mullioned windows and a weatherbeaten oaken door. has fallen into disuse. There is a mansion, too, not far with

little church.

away, with lodge and gates and lawn. It all is thorough English, old and new.

No other village lies so intimately near. Studded about the undulating plain, and on the margins of the level, willow-skirted moors, are hamlets, big and small, and towers with pinnacles that peep between the elms. And thereby hangs a tale.

Weather permitting, and with ordinary luck, you will not long be left alone.

A native Idler, with qualifications far above your own, comes strolling round the hill for a breath of fresh air. Behind your shoulder as you sit he stops, out of mere idleness, to pass the time of day.

> "A beautiful fine marnen."

He has the sing-song manner of the country. His voice drawls up and down and falls pleasantly upon the ear.

"It is a fine morning — a remarkably fine morning. And a magnificent view."

This is the truth, of course; but more than that, since he lives here and has a prior claim upon the view, it will serve as a



The richest and the best of Somersetshire spreads all in sight.

sop to his patriotic pride.

"Ay, you can see a long ways," he sighs.

It sounds as if corroboration were a duty which gives him pain. In reality he is enjoying himself greatly, like a man who draws a long breath after a deep drink. He steps out beside you to the very verge of the slope. He is elderly

and grizzled. He wears a billy-cock hat, out of shape by years of wear, as he is himself; and his clothes are rusty green, and wonderfully patched. He leans forward and looks down into your face. The west wind has brought a tear into the right-hand corner of his left eye. It is evident he has something to impart.

He gives a sweep with his outstretched arm and pointed finger that takes in all the country-side. He is deliberate and impressive beyond all words.

"Now how many churches do ee think the eye can zee here-vrom?"

You reflect. It is astonishing how effective your own share of a conversation becomes when you afterwards repeat it to your next-door neighbour; yet it is absolutely inconclusive when set down with a pen. Upon mature consideration you reply.

"Oh, a considerable number, no doubt. Yes, a very considerable number."

"Zebem hundred churches."

The richness of this part of Somersetshire in churches is well known, yet the statement sounds a trifle excessive.

"Ay, zebem hundred churches, so sure as God-a-mighty made little apples. Why, I'd count 'em vor ee vor tuppence. Or if I didn' I'd be boun' to gie you vive poun'—if I had it. Zo there!"

The old man is sane enough, but most terribly in earnest, judging from his looks. He seems to think his offer a good one. After all, for such a lot of counting, two-pence is not much. And he evidently wants to count.

"Oh, I'd do it," he boasts, with a shake of the head.

He does.

"There's the church o' the Hunderd o' Tingall—an' there's the church o' the Hunderd o' Martock"—He pops out his finger which jumps steeple-chasing all over the country. "An' there's the church o' the Hunderd o' Kingsbury—an' there's—"

Give him the coppers before he has

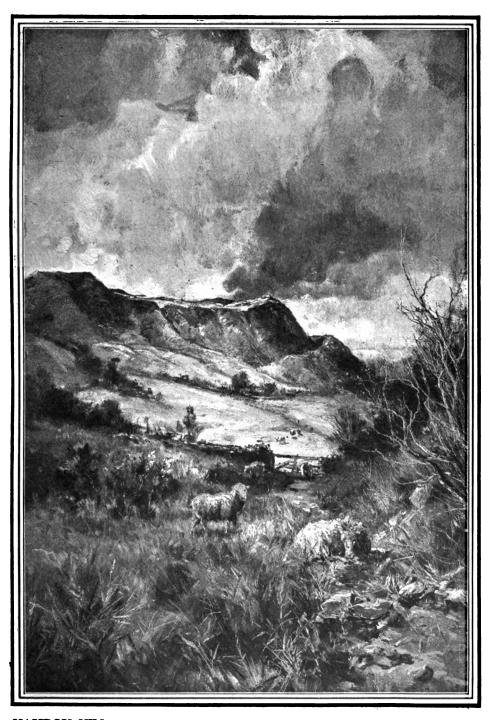
done. The old chap goes upon his way, chuckling over his time-honoured joke that may be as old as Alfred for aught I know; and again you are left to idleness and peace.

When broken April cloud hangs over the horizon, with shadow here and there, and shafts of sunlight in between, that is the time to see a long way off. Under the soft blue sky of May the middle distance fades beneath the light, and all the far-off hills are veiled in haze. Then you may go and note the shady wood with golden sunbeams glinting through the sprays. To see from Ham the Quantocks clear, and the whole range of Mendip crisp, you needs must risk the shower. Sometimes upon Creech Beacon you can almost count the trees. And Cadbury, another British camp, instead of fourteen miles away. looks only four. There is an underlying soul in Nature, a spirit of Life through countless ages striving after higher forms: but all her hourly moods and aspects are but light and shade.

This hill has seen and bears the marks upon its face of many and various types of men. The Neolithic race that dug the trench and piled these ancient earthworks all around have left no name. We have to label them in Greek, and call them by the era when they lived. We know them only by their weapons and their tools of stone, but not a word of all their tongue remains.

Their relics are not rare upon the hill. Only yesterday, just within the rampart, I turned a mole-hill over with my foot, and as the fine soil sifted through the grass it left a pebble brought from some sea-shore, a natural sling-stone, water-wrought and round, like David chose out of the running brook. No record tells the fight in which it sped. And none can guess how long it may have lain under the turf to come to light at last.

Once in my life I was in luck. Years of industrious idling out of doors met in one instance with a just reward.



HAMDON HILL.

Upon Ham Hill are quarries for the famous stone that takes its name. In one of them the even lines of brash above the yellow rock were broken. Someone must have dug there long ago, and now the hole was filled with soil and stones; but through the earth some four feet down there peered a human bone. The quarrymen had cut into the habitation of an ancient man.

It was a Saturday afternoon. Crowbar, pick-axe, and shovel lay idle on the solitary ground.

I set to work and hooked him out into the

These were the early men who dug the marvellous trenches and fortified the hill. To walk around their stronghold is a good three miles; and their work becomes more wonderful after a glimpse into this house, which was but little greater in design than the form under some hillside brake in which a rabbit lies. They had no metal. Their bones prove them to have been little in stature. They were long-headed, and it is believed black-haired.

But they were not the Britons of Boadicea.

Just before the beginning of the age of

Fragment of scale armour from Ham Hill, part of a Roman lorica. The scales are bronze, alternately tinned.

(Reproduced by the courtesy of Walter W. Walter, Esq.)

light again. His flinten knife or scraper, with which to clean the skin that made his coat, lay ready to his hand. His hammer, his pebbles from some distant beach, were there. His hammer was nothing but a flat flint stone, chosen with care to fit his fingers' clutch. His house a five-foot hole dug down unto the rock. The floor was black and charred, and there were bits of half-burnt stick that made a fire at least two thousand years Such was the ground-floor of a furnished winter mansion of this Neolithic man; and when a roof was made of interlacing boughs and coated thick with clay, his palace was not only handsome but complete.

bronze, the Gaulish Celts, a round-skulled race, tall, biglimbed, and fair, came oversea and took these southern strongholds for their own. To them belonged the knights of legend and golden-haired princesses of romance. A Roman historian has given us a description of that proud British queen. He speaks of her great height,

fierceness, and the long auburn hair that reached around her hips.

These were the people that the Romans found; and, following their example, took and held the fortress too.

The relics of the Roman stay are numerous too.

Just within the earthworks, at the northeast point, is a small amphitheatre still plainly to be seen. The floor of turf is smooth, the sides come sloping all around, with only one entrance, an alley narrow and straight. Its shape has earned a homely name to-day—the frying-pan. The lane is like the handle and the circus like the pan. But games and gladiatorial fights are all forgotten long

ago. People come of summer evenings with their kettles to make tea. Their deadliest sport is kissing in the ring; for now this is a place for picnics—nothing more.

Many a fibula and other ornament has been picked up, and several amphoræ filled with coins were found by quarrymen when clearing the loose soil above the stone. Perhaps the Romans buried them, never doubting that they would return. For our illustration of scale armour we are indebted to Walter W. Walter, Esq., of Stoke. It is a fragment of a Roman lorica or corslet, and one of the great treasures of a museum rich in objects of interest collected from Hamdon Hill. It is made of bronze, the alternate scales being tinned.

Idling upon this rampart top, looking over miles of country fading into blue, must needs lead back the mind to far-off time. One drifts into the past as in a dream. A flint, a pebble, or a bit of bronze kicked up by accident, comes like the word or sound but partly understood when half asleep, that shapes our visions into pictures clear and bold. So much is surmise that, no doubt, in part we are fantastically wrong. Yet always a sense of mystery, of broad immensity in ages far behind and yet to come, hangs like an atmosphere o'er all we know, and grows with everything we learn.

For all that, true Idling out of doors should be a present day pursuit. The glory of to-day is worth a thousand yesterdays. The swallows overhead go darting to and fro. The lark sings high above the fresh green oats. There is a wheatear perched upon the stone, that nods and clacks and waits to see which way you come. Inside some rabbit's-hole he shares a nest, where sits his mate on half a dozen eggs of palest blue.

To reach the farther side of the encampment there is a mile or more to walk, often amidst the mounds of ancient delvings, over which a sense of solitude and desolation hangs. Nothing beneath the sky can look so utterly forsaken as these holes and refuse heaps of quarries worked and abandoned long ago. The hollows are not deep, the turf that covers them is fine and soft, and as you pass with silent steps between, they seem to shut you in with solitude.

Beyond the little inn, the only habitation on the hill, you hit upon a winding road broken in ruts and ground to dust by heavy loads of stone. Very soon the distant quarry engine's hum comes floating on the breeze, and then there falls upon the ear the constant clink of chisels chipping stone.

You are back into the nineteenth century again.

In sheltered inlets, here and there like coves amongst steep cliffs, are huts, and workmen busy sawing slabs or carving tracery; for half the churches in these parts are faced with Ham Hill stone, and, like enough, a window, every part in place, lies spread upon the ground.

Amongst the mounds the little road twists like a river finding its natural course.

Here and there it touches on a precipice of fifty feet, with sides as smooth and straight as any tower. Only a two-foot fence of upright flags stands on the brink, and when you peer below, the daws fly out from crevices and turn and wheel whilst you look down upon their grizzled polls and shining wings.

The quarries of to-day are twice as deep as that. Their engines pant, their cranes swing to and fro against the sky, and all the week, from morn to night, the place is busy as a swarm of bees.

There is an hour when Hamdon Hill lights up into a glory and magnificence beyond all expectation or the power of words to tell.

When distant eastern woods grow dim and rooks fly homeward to their roosting trees, when Quantock darkens and turns purple before the splendour of the sinking day, and every little rivulet and stream gleams like a silver thread upon the plain—then, by a touch of magic, all is changed.

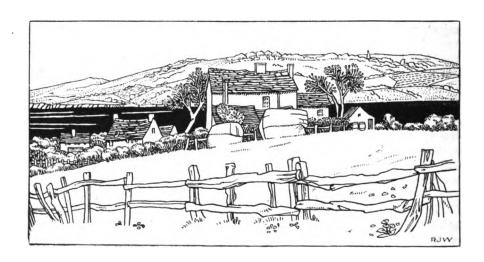
The bareness now puts on a beauty of its own. The hill-top gleams with colour. The western earthworks have grown young again, smiling a farewell to the level sun. The grassy mounds, gilded upon one side, have turned to mysteries of light and

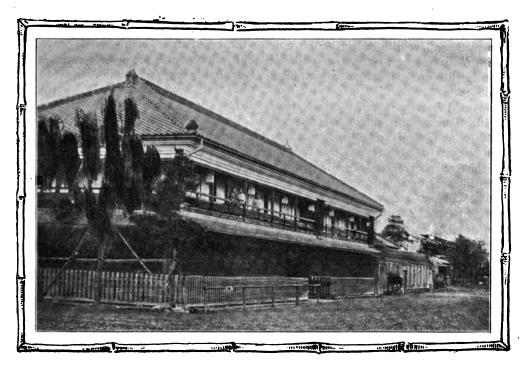
shade; and all the quarries are no longer stone but gold.

It lasts but for a little while, this glorious scene. Just whilst the sun stares full on the hillside.

Very soon the gloom begins to deepen, and the stars to peer.

Then both work and idleness alike go home to rest.





The Tea-House of the Fifty-Cherry-Trees.

THE LAST DANCE OF MADEMOISELLE FAN. TAN.

BY CLIVE HOLLAND.

ILLUSTRATED BY LOUIS GUNNIS.

OTMASU and I were talking, and, as an antidote to the terrible heat of his little office on the quay, were sipping a concoction of the invention of which he was very proud.

Europe and college days had left their mark upon him, and, though he had been back in Nagasaki nearly two years, his attire was still an indiscreet blending of Anglo-Japanese garments. The long dressing-gown-like wrapper of royal blue silk, embroidered in gold thread, looked so singularly out of place either in an office or on the quay, where, surmounted

by a billy-cock hat, Kotmasu, in pursuit of business, often displayed it in the brilliant sunshine.

His office, by the way, served as a sort of club-room for his intimate friends and the three or four English besides myself then resident in Nagasaki, whose acquaintance he had made. His taste as to the adornment of the walls of his private room was decidedly cosmopolitan. Upon opening the narrow lacquerpanelled door, on which hung a small quaint knocker, a representation in bronze of a Japanese artist's fantastic conception

of a mermaid, one's attention was at once riveted by a startling poster of Cheret's depicting a favourite dancer at the Café des Ambassadeurs; on another wall was an English one of theatrical import, hung alongside of an idealistic panel on a buffcoloured background, of a dainty geisha girl. Beneath this hung a fine photo of St. John's College, and a panoramic view of Nagasaki Harbour taken from the hills behind, steamer sailing-bills, other posters, an almanac, and a couple of French water-colours filled up intervening spaces, and gave the little room an air, as I had often told him, "of gaiety and gaudiness which would compete on level terms with a Parisian advertising kiosque."

"It is true Art," Kotmasu would rejoin, with a deprecatory smile; "it arrests and compels attention. It is 'a blow in the eye' as the French have it. No one would think of looking at me, or even a pretty girl, with that poster of Cheret's staring them in the face. And I have an idea," he continued, solemnly, after a pause, "that it is good for business. When, for instance, old Keiki San comes to see me he sits down and regards that dancing-girl with as great an amount of attention as he would bestow upon a sacred picture. I say to him: 'You will want so and so; I should make it 400 yen.'

"And he says: 'Yes, yes.'

"And then when he rises to go he exclaims: 'That is a very fine picture of yours. Oh, what a marvellous figure! I suppose, Mr. Kotmasu, it is not for sale?'

"And I tell him it is not. And that it is, indeed, a marvellous work of art."

I laugh.

Kotmasu continues: "You don't believe it? I assure you they are nearly all the same, and when I want to have a joke to laugh over to myself I tell them, 'She wears Court dress.' I don't explain whether it is the upper or lower half; and they go away shocked at the European custom." What more he would have told me I cannot say. I had hard work to prevent myself from laughing even in such heat, which made the ink Kotmasu had been busily engaged in grinding up in a small, flat, lacquer plate when I entered almost dry up before one's eyes.

Just as he recommenced to speak, after a pause for breath and refreshment, the door was burst open and Angus Leslie entered.

"I've been and gone and done it. It's a' o'er wi' me," he exclaimed, sinking into a bamboo lounge-chair.

"What?" we simultaneously ejaculated.

"I'm going to marry Fan-Tan."

Had Leslie announced the probable recurrence of the earthquake we should have been far less alarmed, and, it is almost needless to say, far more credulous.

Mademoiselle Fan-Tan was a fascinating little personage it was true, but—

Well, she was a dancer at the tea-house of Fifty-Cherry-Trees, in Mimosa Street, and who in their senses would dream of marrying a geisha girl?

Kotmasu drummed upon the table with a bronze paper-cutter. At length he said:

"Fan-Tan will come and live with you; no need to marry her. She not expect it."

"Confound you!" exclaimed Leslie, firing up. "What do you take me for?"

Then seeing Kotmasu's blank look of astonishment, he calmed down a bit, and went on. "No offence my boy, but we do things differently in Edinboro'. My mither would ne'er look me in the face if I did anything o' that sort. And I'd no be able to face it out wi'the meenister. And I'm going back to her some day, please the Almighty."

In Leslie's smoking-room there hung a big photograph of his mother. On Sunday the Almighty claimed his attention in a way which had long ago won our respectful admiration, and the Mission-room psalmody was the stronger for the assistance of his lusty, if not over tuneful, voice, raised in the queer-sounding Japanesed English hymns.

"I shall take her before the Consul the day after to-morrow, and I shall be glad if you fellows will come. That is, if you care to."

We always took Leslie seriously, and so Kotmasu, recognising the tone of finality in his voice, only whistled, screwing up his comical face, and said, "I will attend with pleasure." Adding, "You have satisfied Kin-Sin's claims, I suppose? He's a cunning old fox. He won't like releasing Fan-Tan. Her dancing and pretty face draw a good many customers."

"She is free," rejoined Leslie. "She will dance no more at the Fifty-Cherry-Trees."

When Leslie, who was too busy to stay longer—he had so much to do to get the home ready for Fan-Tan, he said,—had gone, Kotmasu burst out laughing and exclaimed:

"How bored he will be after a little time, he is so very what you call it—ah, yes, so very sober-sides, and she is so very errant. It is not always summer," he continued, shrugging his shoulders, enunciating a favourite theory; "they cannot always live out of doors or with open windows. And to be shut up with Fan-Tan or any other woman! Ah, well, I am glad it is not I."

Kotmasu had no great belief in this marriage of Leslie's. At the Consul's he had a 'skeleton at the feast' air far from inspiriting. And afterwards at the little home, perched some way up the hillside, with its tiny rooms thrown wide open to the penetrating sunlight and the incursions of Fan-Tan's many relations and friends, he seemed to be an almost unwilling guest.

Before, it had been Leslie's "house" to strangers; "den" or "diggs" to each other. Now it was his home. It was Mademoiselle Fan-Tan who had made all this difference.

Fan-Tan, a little woman in brilliant attire, whose mixture of colours challenged the rainbow, with artificial manners acquired by her contact with the Japanese ieunesse dorée foregathering at the tea-house of the Fifty-Cherry-Trees, flitted about amongst her quaintly obsequious relatives and friends. one moment in the verandah running along the garden side of the house, and next hurrying, with tea-house alertness, along the gay, iris-bordered path to join some little group of guests, or to show someone the tiny arbour beneath the weeping-willow at the extreme limit of the flower-bedecked garden.

There was something singularly quaint about this wedding reception. Leslie was such a great man, "such a velly much rich man," in the eyes of the motley gathering of Fan-Tan's bowing and prostrating relations and friends; some of whom must have left their tea-picking to be present.

Amid the buzz of conversation, which scarcely ceased even when the guests were sipping tea and infused cherry blossoms from tiny cups, and eating little cakes and teriyaki (sugar-coated plums), one heard the noise of the cicalas, and occasionally the hoarse croak of a frog disturbed out of season by some prying elf of a Japanese baby, whose tired-out sister had probably put him down for a minute or two beside one of the several tiny ponds, in which gold-fish were gaping and blowing bubbles near the surface.

They are in no hurry to go, these guests of Leslie's and Fan-Tan's, but at length some of the busier ones make a move, and then Kotmasu, McKenzie, and I, after a glass of saké, in which we drank the health of the bride and bridegroom, left the diminishing throng of guests, and went down to the chaya we patronised.

We decided over glasses of "brant wein" that Fan-Tan's charms would soon lose their potency; but, unlike most prophets, as we liked Leslie, nothing would have pleased us better than to have been proved to be wrong.

Months went by, and except that Fan-Tan's face seemed at times to wear a somewhat bored expression, and that she welcomed me with more effusion than was absolutely necessary, she and Leslie seemed to get on very well.

Of course, we chaffed Leslie, telling him that he was like the traditional Spartan boy. He laughed good-humouredly enough, but once or twice I fancied an expression flitted across his face which gave cause for apprehension.

That Fan-Tan could be fond of him never occurred to me, at all events. Kotmasu would have scouted the idea—Fan-Tan's affections had in the past been of so truant a nature. But some women's affections crop up in the least expected places, and at the least likely times.

I had not seen Leslie for some weeks; as at the end of about six months of married life he had suddenly retired inland to a neighbouring village. He came in before leaving to bid me good-bye, and he told me that he had an idea of buying a tea-plantation. I laughed, for I knew that he was in reality running away from his mother-in-law and Fan-Tan's too numerous relations, who, in their adoration of the "velly much rich English Sir," had trooped up his garden path at all hours; in the heat of the day, sheltered by gay-hued paper umbrellas, across the yellow, red, or blue flat tops of which queer uncouth animals and fishes sprawled in violently contrasting colours; at night, swinging fantastic paper lanterns, which oscillated wildly, suspended from their slender carrying-sticks.

From my own verandah higher up the hill I could see them of a night advancing in the darkness up the rough footway to invade Leslie's premises, their multicoloured lanterns glowing like will-o'-thewisps in the gathering dusk. They were so terribly numerous, these relations of Fan-Tan, and their politeness was so

exasperatingly genuine, as Leslie often complained, that for him to show them the door would have been nothing less than an outrage.

Whilst Leslie was away at the village near Urakami we heard little or nothing of him. Once or twice he came over and, dropping in at Kotmasu's office at the time he knew we should be there, had a chat, but he was not very communicative concerning either Fan-Tan or her doings.

"She is very well?" we asked.

"Yes. But she is dull, and we shall therefore be coming back soon!"

Were there any letters, he asked, on the occasion of one of these flying visits.

Kotmasu opened a drawer and took out a bundle. There was only one, and that was black edged, Leslie took it from him without a word.

He turned very pale, and then he broke the seal and read it through,

When he had finished, the colour had come back into his face. He simply said, "I was afraid it was my mither. It's my uncle."

"It makes a difference to you?" I hazarded.

"Yes, my cousin died last year."

"Allow me to call you first Sir Angus Leslie," interrupted Kotmasu, never to be left behind in these matters.

"Thanks."

But all the same his face was clouded, and I instinctively realised that Fan-Tan had suddenly become as a millstone about his neck.

Fan-Tan in Nagasaki on a salary of 2,000 yen (about £400) Leslie had evidently thought possible, but Mademoiselle Fan-Tan as the wife of a rich laird—well, it was not to be thought of.

A few nights later, and Leslie's house, which had now lain for some months dark and deserted down below mine, was once again lit up.

He had returned.

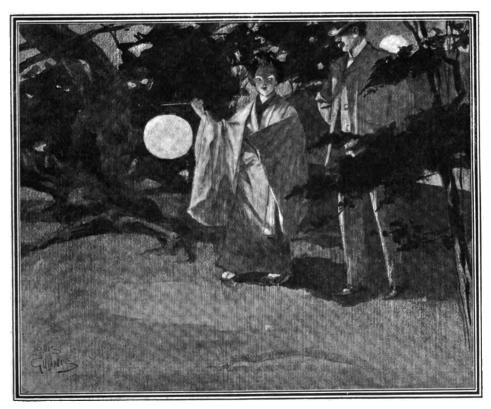
I had no scruples in taking a yellow paper lantern from amongst the dozen or so in the corner, and making my way down the dusty crumbling footpath to see how they were. They would not mind an intrusion, and I knew Fan-Tan would make the lavishly applied blanc-de-ferle and rouge on her tiny cheeks crack with her welcoming tea-house smile.

"Hello!" said Leslie's voice, as I came up the garden path, and, on looking, I

No, I don't mean that," judging an expression on my face. "I mean she can't go back with me. She is married to me right enough, but the thing is impossible. It would be ridiculous. I shall make her an allowance as long as she lives."

"Does she know about it?" I asked, after a pause. "Does she care?"

"Yes, as regards the first, and no, pro-



Fan-Tan carried a great lantern of pure white paper.

saw the advancing glow of his cigar end in the dusk.

"I thought I'd drop in. I saw the place lighted up."

"I'm glad you did." And then he went on without a pause, "I'm going back. I don't know exactly when—but when I can arrange things."

"What about Fan-Tan?" the thought slipped through my teeth ere I could stop it.

"Fan-Tan? Of course it is all over.

bably, as regards the last," Leslie replied, as we approached the three steps leading up into the verandah. "And yet sometimes I fancy that she has got rather to like me, quite independently of the money I give her. You know I was in love with her till I married her. I know Kotmasu and you didn't think so. But it's true all the same. I wish the child hadn't died."

As we entered the room from the verandah I observed, in the mingled light of European-made candles and hanging paper

lanterns, that Fan-Tan was kneeling in the corner of the room before a little alcove, in which was placed a small gilded shrine with tiny doors fashioned like those of a temple gate. It was a pretty little shrine, bright with an unsubdued newness. tiny doors were open, but there was nothing inside except a small wooden tablet with a strip of white paper, on which was written her dead baby's name, a small white and blue china vase of withering flowers, and a rude print on rice paper of the Goddess of Mercy. On the ledge of the Vatsuma, where the little doors had swung back, was a small flattened grey patch of ashes, all that remained of the senko (incense) which Fan-Tan had burnt there. On the wall beside the laquered shrine hung a small doll, a small windmill of crimson paper, and some shinto paper emblems, stirring furtively in the cool night air which crept in through the half open shoji. Poor little toys, enshrining memories of a dead child.

Across Leslie's face there swept a transient look of dour disapproval.

And then, as if in excuse for Fan-Tan's little rite, he said: "It is the beginning of Bon Matsuri (the Festival of the Dead) to-morrow."

His voice roused Fan-Tan, which our silent footsteps on the matting had failed to do.

She got up and turned round. Tears had marked their courses down her whitened and rouged cheeks. She turned a pitiful face towards us, and I fancied I could detect in the light, which fell upon it, a look of despair, other than that which came from memories of the loss of her child.

"She will soon get over my departure," said Leslie, when he bade me good-night at the garden gate an hour or so later.

We should see.

As I turned to retrace my steps up the hillside, I caught a glimpse of Fan-Tan standing gazing out into the darkness through the open shoji, a dejected-looking

little figure sharply silhouetted against the yellow light pouring from the room.

Next morning when I was down at Kotmasu's office, looking out of the window across the water to the tree clad hills beyond, Leslie came in. He had been to see Fan-Tan's mother about his departure for Europe. She was not in the least surprised. She raised no objection, having satisfied herself that her daughter would receive an adequate sum of money.

She expressed no regret except one that the house will be shut up, and therefore no longer open to the meteoric incursions of herself and relations.

Leslie said somewhat scornfully, "She sees a way by which the allowance may be largely supplemented. Fan-Tan can return to her duties at the *chaya* of the Fifty-Cherry-Trees. No one need even know that she has ever been married before the Consul!"

From what Leslie told me I gathered that he had made a stand against this proposal. But, after all, what would have been the use, when his steamer had once dropped Nomo Saki astern, Fan-Tan and her thrifty mother could do as they please, and he would be none the wiser; the former might even marry someone else. So he bowed to the inevitable, which might, perhaps, in the long-run, work out to his own advantage.

"There will be a steamer in less than a week," he said, and he intended going by that.

By some strange whim Fan-Tan and he spent that evening wandering amongst the cemeteries dotted about on the hills, which were gay with innumerable lanterns, glinting amid the pines, camellias, and giant cryptomerias, and destined to light the footsteps of the returning ghosts of the dead. High above my verandah on the hillside, to the right and to the left they shone, exquisite lanterns of all conceivable shapes, decorated with fringes of paper streamers, and delicate limnings



I never saw a geisha dance better.

of lotus blossoms and idealised landscapes.

Fan-Tan carried a great lantern of pure white paper, which shone like a pallid moon, to guide the footsteps of her father's ghost, and near the grave she placed a tiny straw horse for it to ride.

Leslie came in for a minute on his way down, and told me where they had been, and what they had done.

"I feel quite eerie," he said finally, and with that he rushed off to overtake Fan-Tan, whose lantern had just swung round the corner out of sight down the path leading to their house.

Next day Kotmasu came to me quite excited. In his hand he had a rice paper bill of the *chaya* of Fifty-Cherry-Trees, announcing, with numerous pretty figures of speech, the re-appearance of "The lovely, moon-faced, willow-like *geisha*, Mlle. Fan-Tan," for the first time on the night before Leslie's steamer sailed.

"She's gone back you see," remarked Kotmasu in an I-told-you-so tone of voice.

Kin-Sin had given him the bill with a beaming smile of satisfaction, seeing a return of many of his *jeunesse dorée* patrons, that left his *chaya* when Fan-Tan had married, for that of a rival who had engaged two pretty Tokyo *geishas* to tempt them.

"You will go and see her?" Kotmasu asked.

"Certainly."

"I am going to see how it will all work out."

"We will go together."

"Very well."

On the night, as I passed by Leslie's now deserted home—the last of his things had been taken down to the steamer the day before, and Fan-Tan had returned to her mother—on my way into the town to meet Kotmasu, Angus came out of the gate.

He walked along with me, and half an hour later we were seated in the brilliantly lighted *chaya* close up to the little impromptu stage on which Fan-Tan was about to posture and dance.

The lanterns swung lazily to and fro in the night air, which was strong enough to agitate without endangering them. On those hung just above the mimic stage, the matting covering of which was spotlessly white, Fan-Tan's name and titles were emblazoned. Whilst attached to the trunks of the cherry trees and laid upon the futon (cushions) and benches were bills announcing "The return of Mademoiselle Fan-Tan," each one decorated with a dainty coloured sketch of a geisha in one of the bottom corners.

On other seats close to us were Kin-Sin's returned patrons. Youths of the upper class in semi-European attire, and with silly, whitish, vacant-looking faces, worshippers at the shrine of Fan-Tan.

They awaited her appearance impatiently. At length she made her entrice. Her dress was extremely rich, as befitted the favourite dancer of a swell chaya. As she bowed her face almost to the matting I saw that she had recognised us, and at the same instant I fancied I recognised the dress, or at least part of it.

"I promised her I would come," said Leslie, in a low tone at my side, "a whim; but as we had had rather a scene at parting," and he laughed uncomfortably, "I didn't like to refuse."

Before Fan-Tan commenced to dance, a small lacquer-topped table was brought on to the stage by an attendant. On it were several paper fans of different sizes, and a tiny china cup.

Fan-Tan could dance.

I never saw a geisha dance better. All the dainty grace of butterfly and humming bird seem concentrated in her small, lithe person.

Kin-Sin beamed from his point of vantage at the left-hand side of the stage. The *jeunesse dorée* were in inarticulate ecstacies.

When Fan-Tan had reached the last

figure, she laid one of the fans down on the table, and took up the little cup.

"Perhaps," I thought, "it contains saké, or maybe sweetened cherry-blossom tea."

She turned her eyes towards Leslie, and a look of loving reproach seemed to shoot from them. Then her little feet in their white *tabi* recommenced to move glidingly with a soft shuh-shuh in the dance.

It was coming to an end, when quite suddenly she paused, and raising the cup to her lips, drank the contents; bowing to us just as she had seen Kotmasu and I do at her wedding, when drinking her health.

The cup fell from her hand, and rolled across the matting to the edge of the stage.

Almost ere we could realise that anything untoward had happened, the little figure of the dancer seemed to collapse with a shuddering wail, and a heap of disordered clothing lay upon the floor of the stage.

Fan-Tan, without a word, dressed in her wedding-dress, had crossed the bourne from which no traveller returns, to the realm of the beloved ghosts.

Next day, just as we were bidding Leslie farewell, a messenger came on board, and silently handed him a small package.

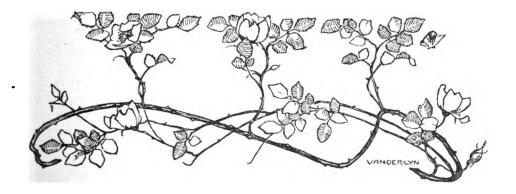
He opened it, it contained a roll of notes and gold, a small strip of rice paper, which fluttered out on to the deck.

I stooped and picked it up.

On it were written these words in Fan-Tan's own hand,

"Good-bye, ten thousand happy years to you. I wanted you; not gold."

Leslie had it seemed, struck through the rouge and powder, and her little artificial ways, to Fan-Tan's heart.





THE SHUDDERING ANGEL.

From the unpublished painting by G. F. Watts, R.A.

(By special bermission to "THE IDLER.")

THE ANGEL BIRD.

BY GEORGE A. B. DEWAR.

WITH A REPRODUCTION OF A PICTURE BY G. F. WATTS, R.A.



NLY an hour or so before sitting down to write this article I counted on one side of a single London street, and that

street by no means the most frequented in town by those who revolve in the world of fashion, over a dozen ladies wearing in their hats and bonnets the plumes of the Little Egret; of the Little Egret, which is the angel among birds in the snowy whiteness of its plumage, and, perhaps, the most cruelly persecuted of all the fowls of the air.

Sitting in his gleaming wood - the "wood that is dearer than all "-the hero of Maud noted the perpetual carnage of Nature, pondered over the may-fly being torn by the swallow, the sparrow speared by the shrike, and concluded that Nature was one with rapine, "a harm no preacher can heal." No one who observes what goes on in the course of the ceaseless struggle for existence in every English meadow, in the sweet woodland ways, and in the crystalclear trout streams, can doubt that it is as the hero of Maud exclaimed in his bitter Rapine and ravin form one of the great laws of Nature, "red in tooth and claw," and the campaign of the wild creatures against one another is often enough a campaign of cannibalism. It is a campaign, however, of sheer necessity, and instances of the lower animals mairning and killing one another in a spirit of wantonness, if they exist are at least rare.

But what can we say of the wantonness, or call it the thoughtless vanity, of human beings, who, in order to be "in the fashion," purchase and wear plumes and feathers the gathering of which has inflicted agony of a peculiarly shocking kind on a harmless and lovely bird; has very likely, indeed, subjected to slow starvation a little family of helpless, unfledged voung; and has lowered the gatherer, or call him the torturer, to a level beneath that of the brute creation? At the beginning of this article appears my name, and I'am not unaware that by writing these words under my signature I may call down upon myself the retorts or strictures of those who differ from what is herein stated, and who know that the same name has appeared under various articles and on the title pages of one or two books devoted to the subject of sport. Sport, it may be urged, whether with the fishing-rod or with the gun, must inflict, to be successful, some pain on wild crea-I agree that sport must inflict a certain amount of suffering, yet its uses are so great and so universally recognised even among those who wield neither gun nor rod, and who hunt neither with hound nor harrier, that its defence must always be an easy matter. Moreover, the true and upright sportsman will never inflict on his quarry the least pain which can by reasonable precaution be avoided. He will not, for instance, allow a fish to linger a matter of moments in possible pain when that fish has been conquered and landed, and he will not shoot at a hare or other wild creature unless he believes there is a reasonable chance of killing it outright. One has seen a gunner

shoot at a hare out of reach and chance merely wounding it, but never a good sportsman. Can it be seriously contended that there is anything in common between the plume-gatherer who goes out to pluck the feathers off the back of the living bird, and who, as is notorious, often tosses that still living but grievously maimed creature aside instead of despatching it, and the English angler or gunner whose love of sport is not love of gain or of

slaughter so much as love of the sweet countryside, of the delicious trout stream, or of the fair woodlands and fields of his dear native land? I assert stoutly that the good sportsman loves to inflict pain or to see pain inflicted on animals as little as any sane and sound-hearted man or woman.

But to revert to the real subject of this article. Chief among the many victims of an idle fashion, among the slaughtered innocents of the air, is the Little Egret. For a matter of centuries the bird has paid a severe penalty for its beauty. Bewick

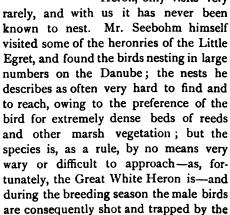
tells us that the feathers of this little heron were formerly in demand as decorations for the helmets of warriors, whilst, later on, they were to be seen in the turbans of many Persians and Turks.

It has been reserved, however, for the last decade or two of this century of civilisation to establish the slaughter of the Little Egret on a really extensive scale. Where the bird was killed by the score it is now killed by the thousand, and, unless fashion should soon begin to weary of the familiar white plumes, the species will in the course of a few years become

a very rare one in Europe, if not in Asia and Africa also. At a single quarterly sale by a single firm about a year since, no less than 11,352 ounces of so-called "osprey" feathers were put up for sale. The wholesale slaughter which such sales indicate could not but soon perceptibly diminish in numbers even the commonest and most widely distributed of species; and, as a matter of fact, the Little Egret, though fairly numerous in certain parts of Europe

during a portion of the year, and in Asia and Africa during the whole of the year, is by no means one of the most abundant of species.

At the present time the Little Egret is chiefly to be found, so far as its European quarters are concerned, in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, breeding, as Mr. Seebohm tells us, in the marshes of the Lower Danube, the delta of the Rhone, Spain, Sardinia, Sicily, and Southern Russia. This country the Little Egret, magnificent its relative the Great White Heron, only visits very





Athens. The Little Egret. (Herodias Garzetta).

plume-gatherers, or "bird-plumers," in The feathers in very large numbers. request are those which at this season form the two beautiful nuptial plumes that curve down the bird from the back of the head, together with what has been described as "the profuse and beautiful train of elongated and slightly recurved and filamentous feathers," which the bird can elevate or depress at will. latter yields what was formerly always called by the plumassiers the "aigrette," but is now for purposes of deception, called the "osprey" or the "brush osprey." The female has also during the breeding season some of the coveted feathers, and, consequently, both sexes suffer. feathers are, as a rule, plucked out of the living bird by the plumers, and, what is, if possible, even more shocking, the poor creature is, after this maining, frequently thrust aside to die by inches. should it be expected, indeed, that a man sufficiently brutal to pluck feathers and skin off a living bird should put himself to the trouble of afterwards displaying some mercy by killing his victim outright?

The plucking of the Little Egrets takes place, as we have seen, during the breeding season only, because at other times the birds are without their fine nuptial This means the slow and sure plumes. starvation of large numbers of unfledged young, which, deprived of their parents, must simply rot in their nests. And yet we talk about the horror of the Spanish bull-fight, and of the barbarous practices of our forebears who rejoiced exceedingly in badger-baiting, cock-fighting, and in the "ring": we of the end of the nineteenth century, who deal so extensively in these fatal plumes and feathers! Was there ever a clearer case of the mote and the beam?

A good deal has been spoken and written within the last season or two concerning the slaughter of the Little Egrets, and several influential men in public life have joined in the protest

against what it is really scarcely too strong, from a bird-lover's point of view at any rate, to describe as murderous millinery. Some of the traders in these plumes have begun to feel anxious, perhaps, lest the agitation should really end by affecting or even destroying their business, and accordingly the name of "aigrette," which was at one time in universal use, has given way, in many instances, to "osprey" or "brush osprey." Ladies are assured that there is no need to feel in the least uncomfortable in regard to these "ospreys," which, it is alleged, are either feathers cast off in the ordinary course of nature by the bird or else merely manufactured imitations. In point of fact, they are usually neither one nor the other, but just the perfect plumes which at some time or other have, as we have seen, been plucked from the living bird. Good imitations could not be made at the price asked and obtained in London and Paris. Was there ever. I wonder, a fashion in dress attended by greater or so great evils? First, there is the pain suffered by the victims and their young; secondly, the brutalising effect on the men who gather the plumes; and thirdly, the falsehoods and frauds which are resorted to by some, at any rate, of the traders—I should be sorry to sweepingly say by all-in order to deceive and relieve customers who have begun to feel twinges of a slowly awakening conscience.

This Little Egret, only matched, perhaps, in the pure whiteness of its plumage by the noble Snowy Owl of the extreme North of Europe and the Polar regions, is, as I have said, the chief among the victims to the caprice of fashion. It is, however, far from being the only one. In the beautiful picture by Mr. Watts, which The IDLER is able this month to show its readers an engraving of, we see a little heap of wings and feathers of various species of birds lying in front of the figure, who has hidden her face

in her hands in intensity of horror over these misdeeds; a figure whose attitude betokens one capable in her sorrow over these bird butcherings of shedding

"Tears from the depth of some divine despair."

Thousands and thousands of wings and feathers of tropical and brilliantly adorned birds deck the hats and bonnets of ladies throughout the land at this present time. Mr. Henry Forbes, in the latest volume British Birds: Their Nests and Eggs, says he witnessed the shipment in one vessel of a consignment for London

and Paris - for the French are, like ourselves, sinners in this matter - of numerous cases, containing about half a million skins from Rio de Janeiro! Equally large consignments have been made from New Guinea, Aru, and Ceram, where the skins and wings may be seen laid out in long sheds awaiting shipment to this country. The Moluccan Islands, too, are among the unholy hunting-grounds of the birdslayers. The cruelty in regard to these victims is far less considerable,

it must be frankly admitted, than the cruelty practised in the case of the White Herons, in that the plumes do not appear to be torn off the living creature, but the wastage and destruction of bird-life is deplorable; and, no doubt, the young are frequently left to perish from starvation.

To say that women are, as a rule, far more tender-hearted than men is to utter a truism. And yet, strange to say, many thousands of women, who might be expected to grow "tender over drowning flies," go on buying these plumes, though they can scarcely have failed to hear, or read, the truth concerning the same. I have myself asked wearers of "ospreys" and other plumes if they know the history of what they carry in their hats and bonnets, and have usually had some such reply as the following:—"But, if I didn't buy them, others would; it doesn't rest with me to change the fashion." Occasionally a wearer will assure one in all sincerity, "Oh, but there was no odious cruelty practised in the case of these plumes. I particularly enquired before I bought them, and was told that they were cast-off feathers like those of the ostrich." It is

as hard to fight against such replies as to kick against the pricks!

A few years ago it was my good fortune to contribute to the columns of The Pall Mall Gazette a series of articles on the monstrous custom of cropping the ears of bull-terriers and other breeds of dogs in this country. At exactly the right moment came a letter, it may be recollected, from the Prince of Wales, which settled the matter. Dog cropping at once became practically obsolete discredited - as and



N. S. Wales. Plumed White Egret.
(Herodias Plumiferus).

Showing the nuptial plume used for millinery purposes.

it is to be hoped the custom of tampering with the ears and tails of certain breeds of dogs for show purposes will also be before very long. If only we could get a few words from an equally high and authoritative quarter concerning the massacre of, say, the Little Egrets alone, I cannot help thinking the effect would be great and instantaneous. There is one lady in the land whose life is known to all the world to have been as white as the plumage of the Little Egret. Could such a lady speak on such a subject and not be listened to; or command and not be obeyed?



Jacobs, Wiprods

W.H. SPENCE

Illustrated ey James Greig

WIDOW Jacobs was worried.
Half a dozen times within the past half-hour had she gone to the cottage door and scanned the long stretch of rough country round, now being blotted out by advancing darkness, but not a soul was visible.

"Drat that boy!" she said aloud with great vehemence, as she poked the fire. "This is market day, and I fear he's gone into company. He's his father over again is my Daniel; so fond o' stir, and venturesome, too. If there's game on he's there. And rafflin', he's a demon for that, he is."

The portly Mrs. Jacobs grew more worried as time wore on. It was now dusk—gone six by the old clock behind the kitchen door, and Dan was still absent. "Work kills worry," exclaimed the old lady, rising and laying aside her knitting; "but I cannot bring my mind to work this night. Dan's gone wrong; something tells me that he has, and——lie down, Rover, will ye!" as the collie under the table pricked his ears and barked sharply. Just then an unsteady foot halted at the door, and Dan, flushed

and jovial, with mud-bespattered cap awry, lurched into his mother's presence.

"Daniel," cried Mrs. Jacobs, her voice all a tremble, "you've been drinking! No? You needn't tell me no; I knows better. See, you've knocked over the milk-cog, and what a mess! Oh, Dan, what would your poor dead father say if he saw you this night? Met your friends at the market, did you? Yes, very like. Nothing but lemonade? Do you think me green? A pretty picture you'd make. There's been me worryin' my heart out o' my breast, wonderin' where you could be: and you in low company, makin' a born fool of yourself. When will you be wise, Daniel Jacobs? Seven-and-twenty years ve are in June, and the older the worse. You won't do no good in the world a-fiddlin' about this way. Heaven knows you don't take that natur' from my side o' the My father was steady as the house. Gibraltar rock, and your uncle Ned, my brother that went to Africa, and wrote me reg'lar once, he's made a fortun' by his steady ways. Oh, you needn't try to slobber me with your excusing of yourself; you're the worse for drink, Daniel Jacobs, and so ye are, and the sooner ye go to bed and sleep back your senses the better."

Daniel was impressively silent during the lecture. He tried to speak, but his tongue was lazy. He could not get a word out anyhow. He sat swinging his long, lanky figure to and fro as he tried to smile. His cap had fallen on the floor. He gazed at it as a man might gaze on some interesting object a mile away. With difficulty he rose and held out his grimy hand to his mother, but she refused it indignantly, and marched from the presence of the disgraced one, slamming the door behind her.

Left alone, the inebriated Dan made friends with Rover, and in a trice he was in a deep sleep on the hearthrug with the dog as his pillow.

"Daniel! Daniel! Daniel!" cried Mrs. Jacobs, bursting into the kitchen like a whirlwind an hour later, "wake up, will ye—a telegram for ye, see! Ah, there's a boy; rub vision into your eyes and read it, for it's me that cannot."

The young man sat up, dazed and wondering. He looked vacantly first at the orange envelope and then at his mother. He turned the thing over and over aimlessly. The delay maddened Mrs. Jacobs.

"Confound ye for a woodenhead!" she cried, snatching the missive from between his inert fingers. "Give it to me," and she ripped the envelope open. Dan seemed slowly to comprehend. Holding the telegram with both hands, he stared stolidly at it. Then he rubbed his eyes and read again.

"Great guns!" he exclaimed, waving the slip of flimsy in the air. "What do ye think, mother? It's from Uncle Ned at the Cape. Hear—

"Come out at once. I leave my fortune to you.—UNCLE NED."

The great news sobered him. He scrambled to his feet, seized his mother in both arms, hugged her and wheeled her about the floor, till there was hardly a breath left in her flabby body. Mrs. Jacobs flopped into the big armchair and laughed and cried by turns for the next half-hour, while Dan kicked his cap

round the kitchen in a mad delirium of delight.

"A rich man! A rich man! Think on't," he cried, banging the table with his fist. "My luck has come! This very day the gipsy said it would come, and it has come with a run. Oh, what a time we'll have, mother, what a time! No more work and worry for you and me, old woman.

"A house in the country and a villa up-to-date, All through knowing an African magnate."

"There's poetry for you; and it's true, every word."

Dan stretched himself to the full height of his inches, and caught his reflection in the little mirror on the wall as he did so. He slapped his chest and saluted his shadow.

"Daniel Jacobs, of Jacobs Hall. What can I do for you? Is it a cheque for a thousand, or one for ten? Only say the word; money's no object." Then he cut his capers again, and his mother laughed hysterically.

"No more shillings on a horse, Rover, boy," exclaimed Dan, seizing the collie by the fore-paws, and waltzing him round the apartment. "Daniel Jacobs, Esq., will have a stable all on his own, stables, and race-horses, and hounds, and double events thick as peas in a pot. Oh, you don't worry, Rover, my man, for your master's speaking gospel truth. Won't we cut high jinks on market-days, and put them in their place?" And, with a final whoop, Dan threw himself on the hearthrug again, and kicked his heavy heels in the air

"What a boy ye are, to be sure," cried Mrs. Jacobs, assuming an attitude of admiration, and surveying the prostrate figure at her feet. "What will the miller say, him who paid you off last week with insultin' words; and what will the whole country say? Won't the people get such an eye-opening as never was?" she cried, laughing. "I always knew as you was born to greatness, always. You looks it,

though I says it that shouldn't. See, take this glass of home-brewed with yer old mother, and here's to us. My head's buzzing like a bee's bike at swarming time, it is. Now you drink that, and thank the powers for smiling on's, says I."

Dan jumped up. With unsteady hand

he lifted the foaming stuff to his lips, and gulped it down. Then he swung the empty jug on high, with "Pooh, mother, small beer's for small people, and not for the likes of us. It will be brandy, champagne, claret, and the finest of fine wines for you and me from this time on."

There was little sleep for mother and son that night. Dan did not go to bed till midnight, and he kept the light in. Round the candle flame there floated all the glory that his new found wealth had placed near to his finger tips As for Mrs. Jacobs, she bade slumber begone, and carried on an animated confab with Rover, the watchdog, as he lay curled up at the foot of the bed.

"Daniel a gentleman," she exclaimed, clapping her hands; "it's grand!—and me driving in me carriage and pair, and nodding how-d'ye-do to the town ladies and the big folk of the bank. Oh, won't we make them all sit up, Rover, and you'll have a silver chain round yer pretty neck, and a dog blanket, and biscuits till yer can't eat more, every day." The dog

looked at her with a sleepy pair of eyes, vaguely conscious that something important had happened that night.

Dan was up with the lark. The great news was too good to keep. By breakfast-time a score of neighbours knew it, and before noon the whole parish



"It's from Uncle Ned at the Cape."

hummed with the story of Dan's good fortune. As the rumour circulated the figures exaggerated; before the news reached the market town Dan Jacobs was a millionaire and the lion of the hour That very afternoon the squire and his daughter called to tender their congratulations at the cottage, and at the gate they met the fat vicar and his wife, who had

already offered theirs. Later on, Mr. Jewsbury, the little banker, looked in bubbling over with excitement.

"Grand news, glorious news," he declared, gripping Dan's hand; "and, of course, you'll require some coin to be going on with—and your passage money? Certainly—anything you wish, sir. My bank will stand good for it, and will be honoured in obliging you."

The preparations for the voyage were made amid a whirl of pleasurable excitement. Mrs. Jacobs persisted in seeing everything with her own eyes, and doing everything with her own hands. Four days later Dan rolled off in the train en route for London, decked out in new tweeds, buried in travelling-cases, and with his capacious pocket-book bulging with new gold from Jewsbury's bank.

At the Cape of Good Hope three weeks later Jacobs said adieu to Captain Sutherland of the *Blenheim*, and to all on board.

The voyage had been a delightful one, a first-class passenger on first-class fare, Dan had lived like a fighting-cock all the way out. Everyone on board knew the story of his great good fortune, and the genial master of the ship had chaffed him unmercifully though good-humouredly.

"Now Jacobs," said Captain Sutherland, as Dan shook hands with him on the quay of Cape Town, "I will pick you up on the home journey. Don't you go dining with Rhodes and Robinson and that lot, and wasting your substance on riotous livin'. Remember your promise—a fiver all round and a wash-down of champagne—and don't you forget it."

"I shan't," cried Dan; "on the word of a millionaire I shan't. We've had a rare time coming out, and it will be a rarer going home, I tell you. Good-bye."

Behind a pile of baggage Dan consulted his note-book.

"I hope as the old boy ain't dead," he said aloud. "That would make things a

bit awkward for me." He fumbled among the leaves. "Ah, here's it. 'Ned Gill, 777, Caledon Street.' Three sevens for luck."

He shoved the book in his pocket again, and hailed a passing carriage. The driver took his instructions with a profound "Right, sir," and off went Dan to claim his fortune. The broad, well-appointed streets were left behind and a decidedly squalid quarter of the town was reached. The carriage halted.

"Number 777, sir," said the driver.

Dan stared as he found the pavement. "You must be in a mistake," said he; "this must be the wrong place. Monied folks don't live in them houses, surely."

"It all depends, sir," said the driver, fingering his reins uneasily and keeping a wistful eye on Dan's right hand. "There be queer people hereabouts."

Dan dismissed the cab and ascended the flight of steps leading to number 777. His nervous knock was answered by a slovenly black woman, who curtsied low as she blinked at him.

"Does Mr. Ned Gill stay here?" asked Jacobs, mildly.

The woman nodded.

" Is he in?"

Again she nodded.

"Can I see him?"

She nodded twice.

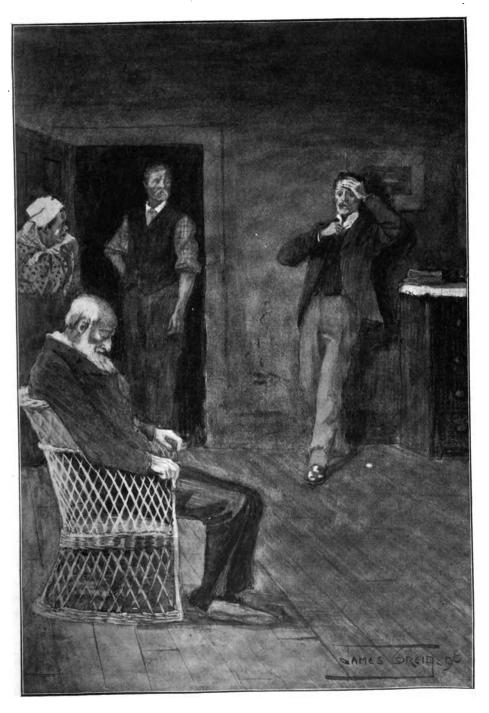
Dan followed his guide along a narrow passage, the hot atmosphere of which smelt foul. Reaching a door at the farther end, the 'black' shoved it open gently. Turning round she smiled grimly at Dan, and tapped her forehead with her knuckles. Jacobs was silent; he could not understand.

"In here?" he enquired in a whisper.

In answer, the negress beckoned him to enter.

He was fully convinced now that he had come to the wrong house, and that this Ned Gill was not the Ned Gill he wanted.

By an open window at the other end



The rebuke was effective.

of the ill-furnished apartment an old man reclined in a wicker chair, half asleep. As Dan approached, he opened his old eyes and blinked up vacantly.

"Beg pardon," stammered Jacobs, sorry to disturb, but are you Ned Gill?"

The old man looked at the intruder hard.

"That's it. What now?" he quavered. Dan was not convinced.

"Are you brother to Mrs. Jacobs, what lives at Cross Farm, Evington, in the old country?"

"Now you have it."

"Well," faltered Dan, "I got your telegram about the fortune, and I've come as you wanted."

In an instant the old gentleman was off his seat. He embraced the amazed Dan and kissed him fervently a dozen times. He took him by both hands and swung him round the place till all his breath was spent, and then he fell back on his chair fairly puffed.

"Good boy, good boy," he gasped, "glad to see you, oh, so glad to see you! Have you heard the tidings? Six times over am I a millionaire—think on that six times a millionaire! This very day I have spent five hundred thousand pounds sterling in charity, and I have sent to the bank for five hundred thousand pounds more. You shall have it, sir, every dime of it. When that's done, come back and get more. Oh! you need not stare, there's millions more—millions / Why, the whole room is filled with gold; it blocked up my bed last night, and I called in five men from the street to have it taken away in a cart. Money? I'm up to the neck in money, and you shall have every million of it. I'm dying, I feel it, and that's why I sent for you." And the old man again hugged the wondering Dan, and began to shout a patriotic song.

Jacobs stood staring at him in openeyed wonder. Was the man mad?

The noise of the shouting brought a powerfully-built, middle-aged fellow, in

shirt sleeves, into the room. He whistled gaily as he entered. Without ado he marched up to the old gentleman, lifted him bodily in his great muscular arms and threw him into the chair.

"No more row with you!" he cried, frowning as his victim looked up pathetically. "You'll bring the house down, so no more noise, or out you goes into the street, see?"

The rebuke was effective. The impotent old man cringed in his seat, closed his eyes, and breathed fast and hard.

"Wait, wait," whispered Dan, as the fellow made to leave the room. "I want to speak to ye. Is the old gentleman here all right?"

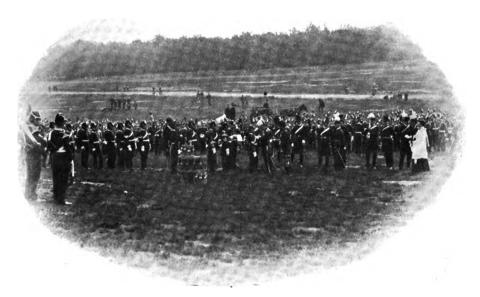
The sentence was interrupted by a loud, deep laugh from the giant.

"Right?" he cried, shrugging his great shoulders, "why, he's as mad as mad can be. He thinks that he's got mountains of money, and he has not one copper to clink upon another. Telegram? Oh, he's always sending telegrams when he gets any money by him. Why, a month ago he sent one to his friends over the sea, saying that they might come and claim his fortune. Think on that—the raving old idiot! They'll have looking for the coin when they do come." And the fellow shook with laughter.

Dan felt something clutch at his heart. He caught his breath, and, gripping his forehead, staggered against the wall. His eyes were starting from his head; he glared at the prostrate figure in the wicker-chair, and then a heart-breaking cry broke from his lips.

"No money? None at all? Mad? mad, mad," he echoed. "Oh! great God, great God!"

Like one bereft of reason he ran from the house, and wondering eyes followed him as, bare-headed, he passed down Caledon Street, reeling like a drunken man.



The Duke of Connaught presenting Long Service Medals to the Volunteers.

THE VOLUNTEERS—AND EFFICIENCY.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. SPENSER WILKINSON.

BY ARTHUR H. LAWRENCE.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOS BY CHAS. KNIGHT, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT.

T N treating of, perhaps, the most interesting phase of the military organisation of our own country, I have thought it advisable to aim at obtaining information which shall be critical rather than descriptive. It would be tempting to write descriptively of our "citizen soldiers" from the time of the inception of the movement to the present day, but it will be more in accord with the point of view taken in the preceding articles to briefly allude to the object aimed at in the constitution of the Volunteer Force, and its degree of attainment. Moreover, there is no part of our Imperial Defence with which the public is so familiar; and, I imagine, that not only the bystander, but the reader who is happy

in the fact that he is one of the units that go to make up the force, would be less interested in mere detail and words of praise on the degree of efficiency which the Volunteers have so far attained than in a few words of criticism which may serve to indicate how far that efficiency may be maintained and increased.

With this end in view, I believe that anyone knowing anything of the subject and the literature on the question will agree that I could not have had better fortune than to secure an interview with Mr. Spenser Wilkinson, so well known as the joint author with Sir Charles Dilke of *Imperial Defence*, and the author of other standard works on the subject, and who may fairly be described as the first and

foremost authority on all questions connected with our National Defence and the Volunteer movement.

It is also recognised that the reforms which have been effected in recent years have been based upon the lines laid down in Mr. Wilkinson's book, Citizen Soldiers (Swan Sonnenschein), published in 1884, which together with The Volunteers and National Defence (Archibald Constable) are amongst the best text-books on the subject. In fact, the whole question has been Mr. Spenser Wilkinson's life-study; and before recording the interview which he so courteously gave me, I cannot do better than begin this article with a quotation from the book entitled Citizen Soldiers.

In the preface to the recent edition of his book, Mr. Wilkinson writes: "On reissuing these essays after the lapse of ten years, I have little to add and nothing to Since 1883, some of the changes I proposed have been made, and others have been caricatured. The standard of shooting required for efficiency has been raised. The drill-book has been simplified, and far too frequently altered. The war game has occasionally been practised, and very commonly misapplied. The Volunteers have received a great deal more money from Government. Elaborate arrangements have been made for mobilisation, and the equipment has been im-But the force is still unfit for war; the essentials have been neglected. Exactitude in elementary drill, intelligence and suppleness in skirmishing, have not become common. Ranges are not more numerous, nor more accessible: manœuvre-grounds are as rare as ever. The officers, upon whom everything depends, are little better fitted to lead their troops in a campaign than they were ten The War Office will not enyears ago. courage nor permit promotion by results. It has appointed amateur, unpaid, irresponsible brigadiers, and has left the adjutants, who do whatever work of instruction is done, exactly where they were. The consequence is that officers as a body have not become tacticians. Many of them, it is true, have passed the examination instituted, at my suggestion, in 1881; but no step has been taken by the War Office to help them beyond this elementary stage. Discipline varies according to the character of commanding officers, and is nowhere remarkable for its excellence."

Then again, "The Volunteer Force is a sham, as every serious Volunteer knows. The principal cause of the failure to improve enough—there has been some improvement—is, that the War Office itself is a make-believe, tolerated only because the possibilities of war do not enter as a serious factor into the calculations of British Governments."

Then in the opening chapter of a book which has had such far-reaching effects, Mr. Wilkinson says:

"The security of England from invasion rests primarily on our command of the sea—a command which, fortunately, there is no immediate prospect of our los-But, like his wise forefathers, who thought it a good thing to have two strings to their bow, the sensible Englishman of to-day would be very uneasy if he thought we had not ready, in case our first line—the sea—should be forced, a second line in the shape of a defensive army on shore. There is, first, the regular Army, then the Militia, and then the They cost between them Volunteers. over fifteen millions a year, and they ought to give a good account of any invaders. That is what the busy man says to himself: he has no time to look further into the matter, and there the question ends.

"But those who have looked into the matter, and who have been able to study not merely what is doing in our own Army, but what the Germans have done and what the French are doing, are one and all filled with a profound uneasiness.

"In the first place, the mere comparison

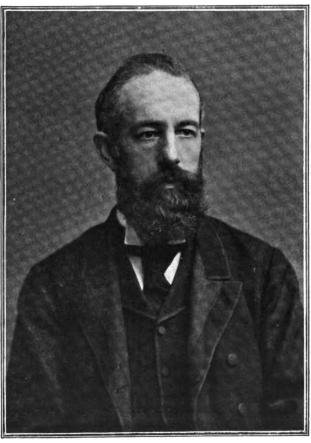
of numbers is, to say the least, alarming. If we take the most recent available statistics and leave out the forces quartered in Ireland, it appears that the entire force of the three services in Great Britain was, at the beginning of the year 1882: regular Army, 62,000; Army Reserve, classes one

and two, 34,000; Militia, 99,000; Volunteers, 200,000; total, 395,000. Compare these numbers with the totals recorded in the history of the Franco-German War. It appears that no less than 1,146,000 Germans crossed the French frontier. i.e., almost a million more than our Militia and Regulars together. the time, too, there were under arms in Germany about 350,000 men, or nearly as many as our own total. The number of French prisoners sent into Germany was 383,000 -a figure about equal to that of the whole British Army at home, together with the Militia and the Volunteers.

"It is true, no doubt, that the whole invading army was not thrown across the frontier at once, but the speed with which it was made ready is no less startling than its numbers. In the annals of

English mobilisation the "quickest time on record" is that of the Egyptian Expedition. The bombardment of Alexandria, from which the preparations may be dated, took place on July 11th. The embarkation began on July 30th and continued to August 11th—that is to say, a month was required to mobilise a single army corps.

"Compare this with the record of 1870. The mobilisation decree was issued at Berlin on the night of July 15th, and on July 31st some fifteen army corps, numbering 450,000 men, were massed outside the French frontier. Since this was done, in 1870, the German organisation has



Mr. H. Spenser Wilkinson.
(Photo by Russell & Sons, 17, Baker Street.)

been materially improved, and France has put forth enormous energy to create another that shall be its match.

"It is not merely in numbers and in the rapidity with which they can be assembled that these armies rival each other. The thorough training of each individual soldier is made a sine quâ non. He must learn to shoot, he must practise

marching, he must be taught how to skirmish, above all he must have a perfectly clear idea of his particular share in the business of fighting.

"It would be easy to present these and similar facts in a more alarming aspect, but, perhaps, enough has been said to suggest the importance alike of the Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers. How great is the share of the Volunteers in maintaining the public feeling of security will be evident if we suppose them not to exist. It is impossible to believe that in the absence of such an organisation the public mind could rest content. The Army rarely has at home a stronger force than that given above, and this may at any time be urgently needed abroad.

"It is therefore essential that there should be always at home, and always ready, an army capable from its training to face any enemy, and large enough to deal with more than a minute fraction of the immense hosts of our neighbour Almost a generation ago it was felt that the Militia were insufficient, both in numbers and in training, for so great a task; and the consciousness of the need produced the Volunteer Force. At that time the dangers were less than at present. The Prussian Army was just beginning its reorganisation; and the French Army, which was regarded as the threatening force, was not half as formidable as it is to-day. But there is to-day no uneasiness as to our national defence, because the people of this country trust in the Volunteers.

"Is this trust based upon knowledge? Are the Volunteers, as at present constituted, capable of taking their place in the field against European troops? The importance of answering this question correctly we have already tried to show.

. . At the outset, it may be best to say that the answer suggested will be a negative. We believe that the Volunteers are utterly unfit, in respect of their training, their equipment, and their

organisation, to cope with Continental soldiers. Those who may draw this conclusion from the evidence produced will find themselves on the horns of a dilemma. Either the Volunteer Force must be made what it ought to be, or the conscription must be introduced. The conscription, however, is what no one will seriously suggest, so that we are brought face to face with a second question, no less important than the first. Is it possible, without changing its character, so to reform the Volunteer service as to give it that efficiency which it does not possess?"

Mr. Spenser Wilkinson was for many years a captain in the old 2nd Manchester, which was in those days a famous regiment, one of the strongest in the country, and well disciplined. It happened that the officers formed a little society amongst themselves, known as the "Manchester Tactical Society," which was so successful in the objects for which it was formed that tactical societies began to spring up all over the country; and from the time of the publication of Citizen Soldiers to the present day it would be safe to state that progressive Volunteers everywhere are in agreement with the opinions which Mr. Spenser Wilkinson holds.

"To begin at the beginning," I suggested, "I suppose it may be fairly asked, Are the Volunteers wanted at all?"

"The question is a perfectly fair one," replied my informant, "because if the Navy is up to its work there never can be an invasion; and if it is not up to its work no fighting on shore would be of any avail. Both Dilke and I go with the Naval School in considering that the essential thing is the Navy, but are both decidedly of the opinion that the country requires a considerable Military Force; and we strongly believe that the Volunteer Force, or something equivalent to it, is necessary."

"Then are the Volunteers at present a

force fit to face well-trained Continental troops?"

"No, decidedly not," said Mr. Wilkinson, emphatically. "And the reason is, first, that the officers have not a sufficiently thorough training, and, secondly, that the training and discipline of the men are not sufficiently simplified and systematised to enable them to make the most of the time which they give to it."

have had two or three years regular training?"

"Then, with the time the Volunteer has at his disposal do you think it is possible to train him in such a way that he will be able to face foreign troops?"

"I have always maintained that it is possible. I have discussed this matter with numbers of foreign officers who disagree with me, but those officers who



"All Comers" at Bisley.

"Then, for instance, they would not be fit to fight French or German troops?"

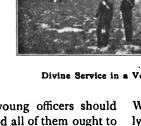
'No; the French and German troops are entirely in the hands of professional officers and give their whole time to learning their business. They work very hard at it and do nothing else. How can you expect that on our Volunteer system of twelve drills a year, that is twelve lessons a year, together with a few lessons of one hour each in shooting, the men can hope to compete with Regulars who

have seen our Volunteers will all of them admit that they could not have supposed it possible that, with a minimum of twelve drills a year, any body of men could be got to do as well as they do. Of course," Mr. Wilkinson added, "I admit that the average number of drills is about twenty a year, but then this average is arrived at by some turning up forty times, and others the minimum twelve times, and these latter are the bane of a regiment.

"The cure for that is to abolish the minimum of twelve drills, and for the Government to say that an efficient Volunteer must attend, say twenty drills a year.

"But the essential thing is to get the officers right. The first point is the selection of the proper people to be commanding officers. That can never be put right so long as the brigadiers are incap-Practically speaking, the present brigadiers are of no advantage to the Volunteer Force. They are retired officers of the Army who are not paid and have no authority except on parade, and they do not represent the modern intelligence and zeal of the Army. The first thing which should be done in this direction

is to select for the command of Volunteer Brigades young officers of the Army —I think they ought to be majors. They be given should brevet rank of brigadier or colonel, and ought to be officers who have served as Volunteer adjutants and, therefore, have got toknow what Volun-



Divine Service in a Volunteer Camp.

teers are. These young officers should be first-rate men, and all of them ought to be paid. Of course, if you do not pay them you cannot get them to give their whole time to the work.

"The second point is the selection of proper commanding officers, and you will never get them unless the brigadiers are first-rate men, able to superintend the instruction of officers of the brigades; they should have a voice in the selection of commanding officers for the battalions.

"The next point in regard to the Volunteer Force is that promotion should be by selection all the way through. duty of the brigadiers should be to instruct and train Volunteer officers."

"Those are the more important points,"

Mr. Wilkinson added; "but close upon them comes the fact that a great many of the Volunteer battalions have not got proper ranges for rifle practice. It is absolutely necessary that they all should have rifle ranges which are perfectly safe, and which are accessible. It is no use having a range, as in some instances, forty miles away. The Government must spend money on obtaining suitable sites. The whole business is really a farce until they do that.

"The next point is the question of The theory that you can imdiscipline. provethe discipline of the Volunteer Force by putting them under the Army Act is

> perfectly childish. It cannot have the result, and it is the idea of people who knownothing about Volunteer the Force."

> "And who are the people who know absolutely nothing of the Volunteer Force?" I interrupted.

"The military authorities at the

War Office," replied Mr. Wilkinson prompt-"You may state that well-known fact as forcibly as you like. In the course of twenty years I have never been able to find anybody at the War Office who can be said to know what a Volunteer is, who understands that a Volunteer has to work for his living, and that he is obliged to do his volunteering in his spare time and at his own convenience.

"But to return to discipline and the way you can hope to attain it. First of all, you must encourage your officer by selection. Secondly, you must give your officer authority. The captain must be allowed to run his own company in his own way, and no one meddle with him. Success should be followed by promotion



to yet more important duties, and failure should relieve the officer from any further work of the kind. Thirdly, my own conviction is that you should abolish blank cartridge. You should never let a Volunteer use his rifle unless there is a bullet in it. You must never pretend, you should always shoot. No; I don't think there would be any accidents. Your Volunteer is no fool, and the sense of responsibility produced by having to fire a bullet would go a great way to ensure discipline.

"In making these suggestions and criticisms, it must not be forgotten that I am filled with admiration for the Volunteer Force, considering the difficulties with which it has to contend. I simply suggest that these difficulties should be promptly removed. People do not know, and certainly the Government does not know, what can be done to make the Volunteers an efficient army."

In the course of further remarks on the subject, Mr. Wilkinson said: "The Volunteers ought to be taken out for long marches, and when taken out they should be brought home tired. If you want to discipline them you must accustom them to this. I have seen commanding officers over and over again sending them home because they are afraid the men will This state of fatigue must get tired. be arrived at if you want to turn the Volunteers into really valuable soldiers fit for anything. I venture to say, at this particular minute, of half the Volunteer corps in England, that if the commanding officer were to march them fifteen miles, and then call upon them for a couple of hours' drill, he would find the regiment was completely out of handsimply because they are not inured and are not accustomed to get tired.

"Apart from the Army officer and his duties, to which I have already alluded, it is a great mistake to talk of paying a Volunteer officer. Give him authority—not pay. Moreover, payment does not

appeal to the class of men from whom your officers ought to be drawn.

"We shall never get Volunteer affairs right until we have a Volunteer officer on the staff at the War Office, who knows what Volunteers are made of, and what Volunteers officers really want.

"Finally," said Mr. Wilkinson, in conclusion, "those manœuvres where they get large numbers of Volunteers together are a perfect delusion, and are of no use whatever, except so far as they may furnish instruction to officers and staff. In fact, they are injurious to any body of troops who have not received a thorough elementary training. The reason is obvious. Where the body of troops is not an unwieldy one, when anything is badly done you can get your men to do it over again, and to thoroughly understand what they are doing; but where mistakes occur, and serious defects are observed in the manœuvring of large bodies of troops, you cannot stop the performance in order to put the matter right. Of course, the same thing is true in every study, complicated performances are injurious rather than helpful until the elementary part of the work has been thoroughly mastered.

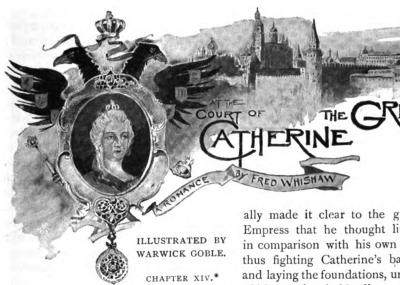
"It is next to impossible to give a concise statement of opinion upon any essential matter without leaving a loophole for misunderstanding. I have told you how much depends upon the selection of qualified brigadiers. The phrase might give a wrong impression to those who know the history of the organisation. In the 'seventies the Volunteers were nominally incorporated with the Army, so that every Volunteer battalion became the —th Volunteer Battalion of some territorial regiment. The command over all the Volunteer battalions of a regimental district was given to the regular officer in charge of the regimental depôt. That officer knew little of the Volunteers, and had to give his time chiefly to the depôt and to the Militia battalions. the 'eighties the War Office grouped the

Volunteers into brigades which are not identical with the territorial regiments. Unpaid officers, mostly retired, were given the command of the brigades, so that very many Volunteer battalions came to belong to two distinct organisations. neither of which had an efficient head, and neither of which was a practical reality. In the 'nineties the War Office has attempted to unite the functions of regimental district command and brigade command in the same hands. I care little for names. It matters not whether your group of battalions is called regiment or brigade. But there should not be two conflicting organisations, and whichever is adopted the officer at the head should be selected for his qualification to train the Volunteer officers, and should have no duties inconsistent with that task. The incorporation of Volunteer corps into the territorial regiments is a mere matter of words, for it never had any reality and never can have so long as the present Army system lasts. The one essential matter is to put the management of the training of Volunteers, and above all of their officers, into the hands of men of solid military acquirements with plenty of time to devote to their duty, and with a true understanding of the conditions in which the Volunteers live and serve."

In considering the remarks made by Mr. Spenser Wilkinson, with which I think most Volunteers will be found in agreement, it will, of course, be remembered that the standard of efficiency maintained by highly trained Continental troops is the standard by which our Volunteers must necessarily be judged. It is, indeed, to the honour of Great Britain, and the spirit with which her sons are imbued, that we should have at hand a force obtained without the compulsion of the conscription, which rules in less favoured countries, and without any mercenary inducement for the services which they so cheerfully render; but no ardent Volunteer will grumble at the fact that Mr. Spenser Wilkinson, and those who think with him, wish to see the Volunteer Force equal to all the duties which it might be called upon to perform; and too much publicity cannot be given to the way in which the energies latent in the Volunteer movement can best be directed; and only the lazy and least useful Volunteer will refuse to admit that better shooting, better discipline, and better arrangements for prompt mobilisation are needed before the nation can confidently rely on her already excellent Volunteer Force, in the event of any of the highly trained troops of the Continent invading her shores.



Private Hills, Bronze Medallist, shooting for the Queen's Prize.



O Poniatofsky the Pole departed, and with him went, for a while, the happiness of the Grand Duchess, who made no secret of her grief. Her Highness did herself no harm either with the Empress or with the people in thus determining to let her lover go; for to the Empress the decision was a relief, while for her subjects it was a necessary concession to the proprieties, and her self-abnegation certainly raised her in their estimation.

Deprived of the consolation of love, her Highness now devoted herself more arduously to politics, by which I mean to the business of strengthening her position with a view to the ends which she continually held in view in readiness for certain eventualities. She redoubled her attentions towards those who were of standing and power in the realm, and chiefly towards the Church, the Senate, and the Army-three departments of State consistently neglected by her husband the Tsarevitch, who made no secret of his aversion to the former (being ever at heart a Lutheran); took no notice whatever of the Noblesse; and systematically made it clear to the guards of the Empress that he thought little of them in comparison with his own Holsteiners; thus fighting Catherine's battle for her and laying the foundations, unconsciously, of his own inevitable discomfiture.

And thus the numbers of the Grand Duchess' secret adherents increased from day to day. Many of these were young guardsmen, some of whom were undoubtedly attracted to the Princess by personal considerations, for she exercised her fascinations upon one and all as a political magnet, and doubtless not a few cherished secret hopes that some measure of the favour lately accorded to Poniatofsky might one day be their own happy portion.

Many a time her Highness spoke to me of Douglas.

"You should be able to bring him over to our side, Elsa," she said. " Have you no influence over your guardian?"

"Madam, it is impossible," I replied, "for the Count is as obstinate in his loyalty as the best servant that ever served master."

"And such a master!" said the Grand Duchess; "it is sad to see good service and a brave and loyal spirit wasted upon so mean an object. I would rather have this Douglas than ten men."

I was surprised to hear this, and—poor

innocent!—proud and pleased also, for I loved to hear Douglas praised. But as for bringing him over to the Grand Duchess, I would not insult him by suggesting it, and so I told her Highness.

"If you can speak to him to no good end, you shall speak to him not at all!" wield them for herself whenever the opportunity should occur.

Was it the Grand Duchess, I wonder, who inspired my old enemy Katkoff about this time to renew communications with me? I have since thought it might be that for reasons and with purposes of her own she did so.

At any rate, one day, during the winter time in St. Petersburg, this man at length spoke to me again after a silence of many months.

> I happened to be alone. I had been enjoying a gallop through the crisp snow upon the islands which lie behind the Vassili Ostrof, an exercise in which I always took

> > the greatest delight, when my horse suddenly slipped, changed feet, and fell, throwing me comfortably into the deeper and softer snow at the side of the road. I struggled to my feet quite unhurt, but when I looked to remount my animal, I found that he had so badly strained his knee that he was dead lame.

I was, several miles from home, and knew not what to do, so stood and pondered helplessly in the middle of the road in a very foolish position,

I was still standing thus when up suddenly rode Katkoff, who,

seeing me, drew rein and dismounted.

He took in the situation at a glance, and said readily and politely enough that the gods had sent him, in their pity, this opportunity of picking up the threads of a valued friendship.

But I trusted him not in spite of his



Throwing me into the deeper and softer snow at the side of the road.

said Catherine angrily; "and as for him, if he will not assist my cause, I shall see to it that he shall not for ever assist the Grand Duke's."

Nevertheless, I might neither speak of this to Douglas nor warn him; for Catherine would not trust me to handle such delicate weapons, and preferred to



courteous air and bade him ride on and leave me.

"That I will never do, Countess Elsa, until I have assisted you," he said. "May I not at least place your saddle upon my beast, and lead your lame one home? Am I never to be forgiven?"

"You know well that your offence can no more be forgiven than forgotten," I said. "But if you are willing to help me in the manner you suggest without founding any claim whatever upon me for the service, and will permit me to ride on while you bring my lame beast home, I shall accept your courtesy because I am in difficulty. But it is right to tell you that I wish it were any other man."

Katkoff laughed aloud.

"It is a very one-sided bargain," he said; "but since I desire you to be assured that I am in a state of grace, and worthy, therefore, of your forgiveness, I will accept your offer, most cruel and most beautiful Countess Elsa, for whom my passion burns to-day as it burned a year ago, in spite of every discouragement."

"I think we need not discuss passion," I said; "but if you will place my saddle upon your beast and let me go my way, I shall remember that you have acted chivalrously in an emergency."

"And will forgive me?" he said oilily, busying himself with the saddle. "Say that you forgive me, Countess, and that our friendship may start anew from this day."

"I say nothing, excepting that I am grateful for your service," I said; and nothing more than this did the man persuade me to promise, though he did his utmost.

But when I had mounted and ridden away, the thought came upon me that, after all, Katkoff had behaved well; for he certainly held me at his mercy if he had been inclined to repeat his villainous conduct of that memorable evening in Oranienbaum Park. Nevertheless, when I thought of this, and of how helpless I must have been in his

hands had he been minded to treat me ill, I grew hot and cold, and from that day onward I determined to go nowhere without the dagger which Douglas had given to me, and which had been lost and restored.

This was the beginning of a renewed acquaintance with Katkoff, which I would rather have left unrenewed; but considering the service he had done me, I had not the face, after this, to refuse to recognise him when we met, which was pretty often.

The Grand Duchess soon observed that I now spoke to Katkoff again, and her Highness expressed her gratification that such was the case.

She would far rather, she said, that I were on good terms with her own good friends and adherents than with those of the Tsarevitch, intimacy with whom could lead to no good.

"Improve your relations with Katkoff, little one," she said, "and you will add to the love I bear you. He is a fine man, and it is a compliment to be loved by him."

"I do not call it love, Highness," I said; "and with your leave I will have no relations with the man whom I hate."

"You are a little fool," said the Grand Duchess. "It is the unpardonable sin in love not to know when you are well blessed by fortune."

"Love and I have no meeting-ground, Highness," I said, trying to smile, but failing. The fact was that at this time I was very depressed, for I was rarely able to see Douglas, owing to the objection of the Grand Duchess, who would not have me intimate with him.

Moreover, he had never avowed his love for me, and this fact sat like a weight upon my heart, for I was now eighteen or near it, and was no further advanced towards happiness than when I was a mere child of sixteen.

But Douglas, as well as Catherine, observed that I now spoke with Katkoff again, just as before the rupture, and since we so rarely met at this time, he wrote me a letter warning me that it would

be better if this were otherwise, for the man was not to be trusted. The letter expressed no regret that we so seldom met, nor did it, I thought, show any evidence of a reciprocation of the affection which Douglas must know well I felt for him, and this omission disappointed and angered me, so that—little fool that I

was — I wrote a hasty reply, saying that since my better and older friends seemed to care no longer for me, I was obliged to be content with the best substitutes I could find elsewhere.

It was a foolish and ungracious letter, and I was ashamed of it as soon as I had despatched it.

Mean while, Katkoff a ppeared to be a changed man, or at any rate to have adopted different tactics towards me. He now displayed the

most reverential courtesy and respect whenever we met. His words were gravely polite, and he did not assume at any time his old offensive and familiar attitude.

I was not taken in by him, however, but remained ever upon my guard, for I could not forget this man's bearing in the days when he had preferred to act and speak as his nature prompted him, and I was well aware, or believed myself to be so, that he was now merely playing a part for a purpose of his own, that purpose probably being to disarm any suspicion of him, and if possible to produce in me a softer feeling for him.

The Grand Duchess-I knew not then

why-was truly pleased with these altered relations between Katkoff and myself and since it seemed to gratify her Highness, who liked and valued the man, I was polite to him and did not ost en tatiously avoid him as I should have preferred to do.

Then one day as I sat, as usual, in our anteroom, I being on duty for the evening in case the Grand Duchess required me, the door opened suddenly, and there entered



"Are you in danger?"

the room, pale and haggard-looking—Douglas.

CHAPTER XV.

I rose to my feet with a little cry, for his appearance startled me, though his coming sent a flood of joy into my heart, as it always did.

"Douglas!" I murmured. "Oh, how

glad I am to see you; but what ails you? Is anything the matter?"

"Can we speak here undisturbed, or shall we walk out? Is her Highness within? Can she spare you?"

"Sit down here," I said, "but do not talk too loudly. I cannot leave; and the Grand Duchess would not like to find you here with me, that is why I bid you speak softly. I am running a risk."

"It must be run, my Elsa," he said gravely. "I have much to say. To begin with, I must tell you that this may be our farewell."

"Farewell!" I repeated aghast. "Oh, no, Douglas, why—why farewell? Are you going on a journey? You will not leave me here alone?"

"Not if I can help it," he said, smiling gravely. "The journey, if I take it, will be a long one indeed—into the land whence there is no return."

"Douglas, what do you mean—what do you mean?" I muttered, my lips dry with agitation. "Are you in danger? Oh, what can I do?"

"Nothing, my Elsa. Stay, there is one thing you can do—kiss my lips if you will, since this may be, as I say, our last farewell."

"Oh, Douglas, do you love me well enough to wish it?" I asked, holding back a moment in delicious surprise.

"I never loved woman but you, my Elsa," he said gravely; "and that you must surely know, for I have loved you since the first day we met, child as you were, and it is hard for a man to conceal such things."

"Oh, Douglas, why should they be concealed?" I murmured, pressing my blushing face against his own.

Douglas held me very tightly in his arms for a moment—a delicious moment of supreme content for me, but of great risk for both; for if the Grand Duchess had suddenly opened the door and surprised me in the act of being embraced by Douglas, whom of all men she seemed to

hate the most, and with whom I was forbidden to have any close dealings, I knew not to what excesses of speech or action her rage might not have led her.

Then Douglas quickly explained to me that he had refrained from avowing his love before this because he had reflected that it would be a mean thing to take my affections, as it were, by surprise -immature and untried. For he had first appeared to me, he said, like a fairy prince in a child's story, I being a very child at the time; and the romantic admiration with which he might then have inspired me would, likely enough, not stand the test of time and the wider experiences of Court life. Therefore, he had preferred that I should well look about me before my child's heart were called upon to fasten itself irrevocably to a plighted troth.

"Most generous and most chivalrous, my Douglas," I chided him; "but withal most foolish, and the cause of much heartburning and sorrow to poor me, who would have had you less courteous and more demonstrative in affection."

"So that this farewell need not take place?" I said, presently. "Oh, Douglas, these silly blind eyes should be put out for failure of their duty, rather than kissed as now! Was it for unrequited love that you thought to die?" Douglas laughed and kissed me again.

"Foolish child," he said; "I should indeed be unworthy of love if I could die for want of it. No; I should live on whether loved or unloved, for love is not all, though it is much. As for our farewell, we must part to-night as those who may possibly meet no more, though somehow I feel now more hopeful and in better spirit than when I came half an hour ago. Do you know, my Elsa, that I have imagined once or twice that there is one—a guardsman of the Preobrajensky—of whom I ought to feel jealous?"

"Not Katkoff!" I smiled.

"Godforbid—no! A far handsomer and more bewitching person for a young girl—Alexis Orlof." I blushed a little, though I would have given the world to keep my countenance. This Orlof was a beautiful man and I could not fail to observe it; I admired him, in common with all the rest of my sex who knew him, but as for comparing him with my Douglas, I should never for an instant think of such a thing.

"I will not deign to answer such an insinuation," I laughed. "But tell me, why are we to part in this tragic manner to-night? You are but half a lover since you declare that you would never die for love. What of this farewell? Was it an invention in order to surprise from me certain revelations? Oh, mean!"

"No; it is serious enough," said Douglas; "though, God knows, at this moment I feel so light-hearted that I am inclined to think little of the danger I am in. What think you of a duel?"

"A duel!" I repeated. "With whom? Why — what do you mean, Douglas? When?"

He laughed and held both my hands in one of his own, patting them gently with the other.

"How many questions to be answered at once! To begin with, my antagonists are all officers of the guards of the Empress; there are five, I think, or six—I was too angry to count them; I am to fight them singly, one after the other, with swords, and to-morrow morning."

"Most merciful Christ!" I exclaimed aghast. "A duel with five men! Oh, Douglas, who are they? and why must you fight?"

"They are Katkoff, Lebedef, Orlof, and a few others, their associates. You know them better than I, for they belong to your Mistress' private following of hotbloods; and we must fight for the best of reasons."

My heart sank very low, for this was terrible news. At the best, Douglas might escape with his life, having defeated all his opponents; but even if he did so, the wrath of the Grand Duchess would certainly pursue him and his end would be exile to Siberia. While at the worst, one of these five or six swords might pierce my Douglas and steal his splendid spirit from me. There were tears in my eyes when Douglas looked at me.

"Nay, nay—do not weep, Elsa," he said, kissing me. "You are not afraid for me? You should believe your knight capable of overthrowing all his enemies!"

"Oh, I do, I do!" I cried; and I believe I really did, foolish and unreasonable as it may have been to believe it. "But behind these men there is the Grand Duchess. She hates you already for—for Poniatofsky; and if you were to kill any or all of these men she would pursue you remorselessly."

"It is true; but behind me is Peter," said Douglas, "and perhaps the Empress, who is grateful to me for helping to rid the Court of Poniatofsky."

Then Douglas began and told me how he had been seated supping alone at the restaurant of Kozlof, in the Nefsky, when the party of young guardsmen entered the room and took possession of a table close They were already half tipsy to his own. and had begun at once to drink hard. Moreover, no sooner did they discover who was their neighbour—Douglas being by this time a sufficiently well-known figure in St. Petersburg—than they began to talk in a manner calculated to offend him, and in tones loud enough for him to hear every word said, of his master the Tsarevitch, and, which was worse-but here Douglas broke off in his tale and paused awhile.

"Proceed, my Douglas," I said.

"I cannot," he replied hoarsely. "They spoke, I may say, most vilely of one whom I love. The delinquent was Katkoff, but the rest laughed; for which they must answer as well as he—each one of them. My cause is good, I am not afraid; I will overthrow them one by one, and for the



"What is the meaning of this, sir?"

rest, the Empress shall know the truth and I shall be acquitted!"

I burst into tears. I could not help it; though whether they were tears of terror for the peril of Douglas, or of pride that my splendid knight should thus have risked his life, sixfold, for my sake, I did not certainly know. At any rate, my tears and sobs came in a tempest and there was no resisting them. I cried and attempted to speak at the same time, longing to tell my hero how I loved and honoured him for this that he had done, but I only succeeded in making an inarticulate noise which must have been louder than discretion warranted, for the door opened and the Grand Duchess appeared.

"What is it—what is it, Elsa?" she said with solicitude; then seeing that Douglas stood beside me, she stopped and assumed her haughtiest demeanour.

"What is the meaning of this, sir?" she asked angrily. "Is not his Highness aware that I do not desire his gentlemen to have the *entrée* of the anteroom of my ladies? Go, sir, and return no more."

Douglas bowed, and was for departing without a word.

"Oh, Highness, listen!" I said. "The Count—"

"Hush, Elsa!" murmured Douglas; but I would not be warned.

"No, Douglas, I will speak," I said. "Madam, listen; this gentleman is my guardian, as you know; he has come to bid me farewell."

"Proceed," said the Grand Duchess haughtily; "this is a most interesting and important communication!"

"To-morrow morning he must fight, one by one, six officers of the guards who have insulted him; he may be slain."

"I see," said Catherine, her lip curling scornfully; "and he would have me interfere to prevent it? His farewell visit has failed; let them slay him."

Douglas bowed low.

"Her Highness mistakes me," he said. "I have no desire to claim her

interference; these duels must take place I am no novice with the sword, I stand in little danger!"

"Dear Heaven! you are confident, Herr Graf!" laughed the Grand Duchess, suddenly casting aside her haughty manner, which had evidently been assumed. "Do you trust yourself to slay or incapacitate six opponents, one after the other?"

"His Majesty of Prussia will give me a certificate of proficiency with the sword," said Douglas modestly. "The Germans are more advanced, as your Highness is aware, in the science of sword-play than the Russians."

"And you, how do you stand among the Germans?" continued Catherine, eyeing the Count with what certainly looked very like admiration. "You are lithe and well set up, I see, and should fence well."

"I have fought to an issue Von Hofhausen, the King's premier master-atarms," said Douglas, blushing.

"And won?"

"And won."

"Holy Mother," said Catherine, sitting down, "these duels cannot take place. Stay, young sir, let me hear the tale of this affair. First, who are these six?—and then the rest of the story."

Douglas repeated the tale as I had heard it, excepting that when he would have omitted the insults aimed at myself, the Grand Duchess would have the whole story told, and caused me to go aside while Douglas narrated this part.

"And so up strode you to their table— Ajax against the hosts of Heaven—and defied them?" said the Grand Duchess.

"I smote Katkoff over the mouth with my glove," said Douglas, "before he had quite finished his lie; but at his vile pleasantry they all laughed aloud; and for this misdemeanour they are to answer one by one at the sword's point."

"Lord, it was well done, young sir; I like your conduct. Nevertheless, the

duels shall not take place; I will see to it."

But Douglas insisted that this was impossible, because his honour was at stake; and no persuasion of the Grand Duchess would alter his determination.

Her Highness fumed, and laughed, and fumed again, but it was useless.

"And what if I have you arrested?" she said presently.

"Then the Prince must know what your guardsmen think and say of him," replied Douglas grave-At which the Grand Duchess stamped her foot with vexation, for she knew well that such a thing must never happen.

"Alexis Orlof is a giant in strength, and a fine swordsman as well!" she now continued, adopting new tactics. "He would perhaps overpower you at the first rush."

But Douglas replied that even though this might be true it had no bearing upon the matter, and that the issue was in any case in God's hands.

In the end, neither by raging nor by persuading, could her Highness prevail over the obstinate manhood of my Douglas; and she was obliged to allow him to depart unconquered, following his retreating form with eyes in which there was far less resentment than I should have expected, and, perhaps, more admiration than I was quite pleased to see.

"Lord of Heaven," she muttered, as he disappeared, "that is a man after my own heart. Tush! it angers me that such a being should be devoted, soul and body,

to a dum-kopf like my Tsarevitch. Your guardian is a man, little one!"

My eyes were moist with happiness and pride, and I bowed to hide them, answering nothing.

"Send for Hetman Razoomofsky," her Highness continued; "he shall arrest these six drunken fools. Lord! I would not have a hair of his head hurt for the whole half dozen o f them!"



"My poor Else," said Olga.

CHAPTER XVI.

Here indeed was a surprise!

These six officers were to be arrested, but not to save their skins, as anyone might have supposed, seeing that it was their own beloved Grand Duchess who ordered the arrest, but to save that of Douglas, which, one might imagine, Catherine would not have moved a finger to protect.

Truly, I thought, life is full of surprises and contradictions!

However, I had nothing to complain of, at any rate; for whereas but last night I had retired to rest unloved, for all I knew, and dissatisfied with the state of things in general, this night I lay me down in the delicious knowledge that I was beloved by the man to whom my heart was given; and that whereas Douglas had yesterday been undoubtedly bitterly disliked by my mistress the Grand Duchess, whom he had certainly done nothing since then to conciliate, having rather piled offence upon offence, this night he had gained much ground with her Highness; for not only had she not punished him for such offences, but had, as it seemed, taken him into favour and even caused to be arrested those who had been minded to do him an injury.

I fell asleep this night a happier maiden than ever I had been up to this hour. Things went well, I thought, with me and mine.

But I soon found that if I expected that her Highness would be any more inclined to look with indulgence upon the friendly intimacy between Douglas and myself after that evening on which he had so well contrived to enlist her admiration, I was destined to disappointment.

The Grand Duchess appeared to be not a whit less disposed to forbid our intercourse, but rather more so. Indeed, I received orders to keep away altogether from the apartments of the Tsarevitch, for, said my mistress, "That English-German servant of the Prince, little one—that fire-eater, who would have spoiled me of six good men at a blow—is no fitting friend for thee, sweetheart. He is too obstinate and self-satisfied; I think him dangerous; I tremble lest he should seduce thee to the side of the Prince, and away from me, which I should bear ill in thee."

"I am no renegade, Highness!" I said, "and Douglas would never attempt to pervert me from my loyalty and my duty; he is too noble."

"May be, and may be not," said Catherine; "I trust no man. Nevertheless, I will not have you run this much risk, little one. When I shall have converted the Count to our own views, which I shall do my utmost to effect, for he is a partisan worth ten ordinary men, then may be I shall permit you to renew your old intimacy with him; but until then you are strangers."

I made no reply, for I would not undertake any such promise. I lovéd Douglas, and wheresoever he should lead I would follow. If the Grand Duchess must in this be disobeyed, then disobeyed she must be.

And sure enough, from this time forward for many weeks, the Court was surprised and puzzled by the new mode of conduct suddenly adopted by the Grand Duchess, who seemed to have determined —now that Poniatofsky with his spell was out of the way-to make amends to her husband for the neglect with which she had treated him heretofore. Her Highness now frequently passed evenings and portions of the day, and of the night, in the apartments of his Highness, whom she greatly inconvenienced and wearied thereby, as I have been informed. As for me, I was never taken in attendance, but Olga Naryshkin was invariably chosen, a circumstance which both angered and saddened me, the more especially when Olga, on her return, would laughingly assure me that this re-union of husband and wife, which had so rejoiced the heart of the old Empress, and of the Court in general, was not nearly so beautiful and enchanting a matter as to the outward view appeared, for that her Highness and his Highness scarcely spoke a word together.

"What then is the order of the proceedings?" I enquired, making a show of mirth, but feeling the desire to weep.

"His Highness yawns, and wishes it were decent to send for Lizooshka," said

Olga; "and her Highness—well, perhaps I had better be silent as to our good mistress."

"No, speak on, Olga," I said; "think not to make me jealous."

"Well, the Grand Duchess is a dangerous rival, as many have found before this day. I warned you months ago to keep your Englishman or German, or whatever he may be, from her sight if he were a proper man. Well, he is a proper man, and the Grand Duchess has found it out."

"And he?" I asked, careless mirth in my voice, but misery in my heart.

"Ah! the Count is a dark horse, there is little to be discovered of his thoughts; he is discreet and prudent, and very silent, and ever polite—he is a sphinx; but it is too much to expect of any man to hold out for long if Catherine choose to put forth her fascinations. We shall have another Poniatofsky in the Court before many weeks."

"Oh, God forbid, God forbid, Olga. My Douglas is not such as he; Douglas is faithful, and noble, and true!" I cried, bursting into tears. "He would never consent to—to such things; nor would her Highness attempt to deprive me of his love, even if he were willing, which he could never be, for she has a kind heart. Do not so dishonour her, Olga, by your suspicions. Her Highness would enlist his service, that is all—oh, that is all, Olga—say that you, too, believe this!"

"I will say so if such words are a comfort to you. It may be as you think. If this Douglas really loves you, as to which I know nothing——"

"Oh, he does, he does indeed, Olga. He has said so——"

"Well, it may be true, but I have found that men are great liars in such matters. I was going to say that if he really loves you he may resist even the advances of her Highness, which are, it is said, somewhat marked when her Highness pleases, and the attractions of a Grand Duchess are possibly more alluring than those of plain people like me and you. For your sake, I hope that this bold Englishman may be made of very strong stuff—he will need to be."

"You will see, Olga, you will see!" I cried; "he is not like others, my Douglas!"

Olga laughed.

"Ah," she said, "we all think that of our men until we know a little better—or worse!"

Nevertheless, discouraging as were Olga's reports, and alarming as it naturally was to find oneself suddenly thrown into competition with a Grand Duchess, I may honestly say that when I had time to think over the matter quietly, after recovery from the shock of the first surprise, I absolutely and entirely cleansed my heart from every shadow and blur of dishonourable doubt that had, even for a moment, marred the perfect image of my Douglas's constancy.

Empresses might, I told myself, besiege his true heart, but that constancy they should never seduce; he was mine, now and for ever!

Meanwhile the Grand Duchess grew irritable in her manner towards me.

She spoke frequently of Douglas; now abusing him and calling him fool and dolt, and dull-brained Englishman; now praising him as a splendid and most virtuous knight, whose service she longed to win over from her husband, but who, she said, was too clownishly upright to entertain the idea of such a change.

"Is he the worse for that, madam?" I said; "for if so, your Highness is reading us all an ill lesson—us who desire to serve you faithfully." Whereat her Highness laughed and said that I ought to be whipped for my impertinence.

Now and then Douglas came, by invitation, to our Court, the Grand Duchess inventing some plea upon which to send Olga for him. Once he came unexpectedly, and good Olga, seeing how I

longed to be alone with him awhile, left us together; the Grand Duchess, unaware that Douglas was in the anteroom, being within.

Douglas looked pale and worried. He sat by me and held my hand, and we whispered together.

"My Elsa," he said, "there is trouble to come, but we will endure to the end. Is it not so?"

"Oh, Douglas, have I ever doubted you?" I whispered. "Never once. Why should there be trouble? We are innocent; God will be on our side! I am not afraid."

"Nevertheless, there must be trouble. For my sins this woman believes herself in love with me; she pursues me. Whither shall I go from her?"

"Go nowhere," I said. "What! Are we to fly because you will not be doubly a traitor to your master. Cannot he protect you?"

"In the last extremity, yes; but she may have time to ruin us ere then if she be crossed in her will. It is said that her Highness is most implacable when matters go ill with her. It would be better for us two to leave the Court altogether, but that I have solemnly promised the Tsarevitch to remain by his side until his accession—an event which he seems to anticipate with terror."

"Then if he insist upon your remaining in the den of the lioness let him deliver you from her claws!" I said, smiling. I had no fear; I still had faith in my mistress, that she would abandon this foolish pursuit when she found that he whom she would corrupt was incorruptible. But Douglas was not so hopeful; he had seen something of the seamy side of Catherine's nature during the last few weeks; he feared her, he said, as one fears a mad woman.

I bade Douglas, out of curiosity, and not, as he well knew, with any—even the slightest—taint of unfaith in his constancy, to tell me whether, supposing his heart were not already disposed of, he could have found room in it for any feeling of devotion towards her Highness; but Douglas said that he never could, not if there were but one woman in the world, and she Catherine.

"And what says the Prince to all this?" I next asked.

"The Prince cares nothing one way or the other," said Douglas; "he laughs and says that her Highness would have me atone for catching Poniatofsky by becoming, for her comfort, as devoted a slave as he. The Tsarevitch sees no shame in such pleasantries, nor yet in twitting his wife because in me, as he says, she has found her match. It is a miserable Court, my Elsa, and I would to God we had never set foot in it!"

"Should we ever have come together else?" I asked.

"We should have met when the hour struck," said Douglas, pressing my hand very tenderly.

We had no time to continue our conversation longer than this, for her Highness here entered in order to find out the meaning of the long silence—our whispering voices not having penetrated into the next room. As a rule we girls chattered incessantly in our anteroom.

Her eyes fell upon Douglas as she opened the door, and instantly she darted a look of anger and suspicion at me.

Those eyes of hers which, as so many persons have said, and as I myself have often observed, are, in moments of passion, like those of a savage beast—cold and glassy and relentless.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WEST AFRICA AND THE EMPIRE:*

BEING A NARRATIVE OF A RECENT JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION THROUGH THE GOLD COAST HINTERLAND.

BY LIEUT. F. B. HENDERSON, R.N., D.S.O.

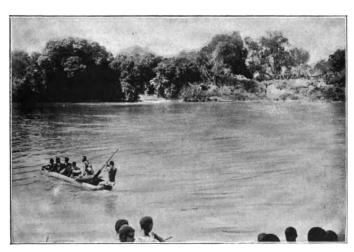
ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR.

II.—Interviewing the Marauding Chiefs.

I N my last article I described how I pitched my tent amid the squat mud huts of Mo, and passed a peaceful night amongst its inoffensive inhabitants. We started next morning about six a.m. just before the sun rose, and after making a light meal; in order to get as much of our

journey
as possible
over before the
heat of
the day.

As usual our departure was witnessed with the utmost interest by the natives, whose



Crossing the river Volta.

attire was as varied in fashion as it was limited in extent. We soon arrived at another village in the same country called Tire, which stands on the bank of the river Volta, which we had to cross. This river was no mere watercourse shrunk to nothing in the dry season, but a fine stream, much broader than the Thames at Windsor, flowing between banks covered with bushes and overhanging

with the sight or the chance of a shot at any of these creatures.

The river presented an unusual scene of animation when we crossed it in five native "dug-outs," each propelled from the stern by a native with a paddle; and the transit was by no means unattended with risk, not only on account of the unseaworthy nature of the craft, but also because the numerous leaks in them had

trees. It has a current running even at this time of the year at a good two miles an hour. There are long stretches on this river where one might travel for miles without seeing a human being, or a human habitation, or even hearing anything to disturb its quiet except the occa-

> cry of s o m e wild beast or bird. It has the reputation of being much infested with hippopotami, but we were not favoured

sional

strange

been hastily plugged with mud. Often before the craft had reached the other side, the unfortunate passengers discovered that they were sitting with their beamends in several inches of water.

Many of our carriers had been boatmen on the coast, and were therefore expert swimmers. They were induced by the offer of small money prizes to engage in swimming races across the river. The passage of our entire party occupied five hours, and we halted for the night at a village about two miles from the river. From this town in the morning we marched to Dekrupé, the frontier town of Mo, with its conical peaked huts. Here we first had evidence of the existence in the neighbourhood of the marauding Sofa, the deadliest scourge of the Hinterland.

The term Sofa is not used to designate any particular tribe, race, or sect, but means literally "Master of the horse," and is applied to any marauders, followers of Samory or otherwise, who are supposed to possess horses; applied, perhaps, with as little reason as the term Cavalier has been to many who were never outside a horse in their lives. The term, however, when used in the Hinterland, is generally understood to imply one of Samory's raiders of no particular nationality.

While we were at Dekrupé seven tattered and travel-stained fugitives, with dust upon their heads, came into the camp. They informed us that they were inhabitants of Bona, and that Samory's son had raided their town, the King, chiefs, and people having "gone for bush" to save themselves from more unpleasant consequences; in plain English, this means that they had made themselves as scarce as possible with the least possible delay. It appeared to be an agreeable feature in the life of the Hinterland that a respectable African paterfamilias could never retire to his mat at night without an unpleasant misgiving that he might be aroused at early dawn by an

incursion of these sons of Belial, who would cut off his head and appropriate his wives and family.

I had heard before, and the intelligence was confirmed by these fugitives, that no food or supplies was obtainable between Mo and Bualé—a five days' march—and that Bualé itself was in the hands of the Sofas, though I had reason to believe that they were probably only in small force.

I therefore sent messengers to Lawra in Banda, which lies to the left of the road, to inform the authorities that I was coming to pay them a visit, and to request them to collect plenty of food. At Lawra I found that the town and surrounding country had escaped invasion, owing to the possession of a British flag by the inhabitants.

Having obtained five days' supplies for my men, I then proceeded to Bualé, through deserted and devastated country. While we were at dinner one night, during this part of the journey, we became very much aware of a disgusting stench. This, on enquiry, we found to emanate from a party of our attendants, who were regaling themselves on what is commonly called "stink meat," namely, the decomposed carcase of some animal, in this case a lion. Fresh meat is scarce in these parts of the country, but, as the natives' tastes in this direction are "high," it makes little difference to them.

When we reached Bualé we found abundant evidence of the visit which the Sofas had paid, as there was hardly a hut that had not been burnt or partially destroyed in some other way; and lying about were the charred and mangled corpses of those unfortunate individuals among the late occupants who had been unable to escape.

We halted outside the town, which, to all appearances, was still occupied by some of the Sofas, though the greater part had hurriedly decamped at our approach. The Sofas had built an enormous camp round the town, which they had made their headquarters for several months, and I found that they had also left some supplies of food, which I subsequently persuaded them to hand over to me for the benefit of my men. The illustration shows the huts built by the Sofas and occupied by our men; under the trees are standing Captain Irvine and Mr. Ferguson, in front of whom are two Sofa messengers.

I politely ignored his request, and we parted good friends.

It was about this time that I took the photo of the town from the west, which is reproduced. It is, as can be seen, a place of considerable size, indeed it is said that in its palmy days it contained nearly ten thousand inhabitants.

We again resumed our march towards Wa, after a few days' rest. On reaching Kulmase, the frontier town of Dagarti, of which



BUALÉ. The Haussa lines in background. Sofa huts on right.

While at Bualé, under these very trees, a messenger came to me from the Sofa camp at Bona, namely, Abu Bukari Demba, a priest of Samory's son, and a fine gentlemanly-looking man of Arab type; he was accompanied by an escort of forty Sofas armed with rifles.

I received him with all possible politeness, which it was evident he appreciated, for afterwards, when I was a prisoner, he proved himself to be a useful friend. The object of his mission was to request me to retire from a country which, he had the impudence to say, belonged to his master.

Wa is the capital, we came upon a band of Sofas, who repeated the previous performance, that is, they immediately decamped; but we found Idi, one of the princes of Wa, and he accompanied us to that town.

The photograph shows this Chief escorting us through a village; he was on foot, his horse being led behind, and our men were following in single file, as is usual in this country.

The next photograph (p. 491) shows the column arriving at Wa, and another represents his Majesty the King of Wa (p. 495) receiving us with his principal



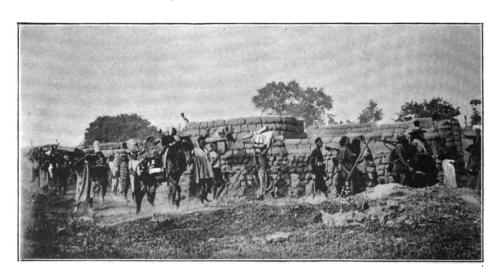
Bualé from the west. Sofa huts in foreground

men around him. His boots will be seen on the cushion in front.

The King was very pleased to see us, and said he was much in need of a strong friend, as his enemies were closing in upon him. From information I had received, I was pretty sure that this referred to the approach of Barbatu, the Gurunsi slave raider. From time immemorial Gurunsi has consisted of a number of independent village communities, loosely bound together under the protection of

the larger towns, each of which was the centre of light of its own little solar system. This peculiar organisation bears some resemblance to that of the tribes of Israel before they had a king, for there is no king of Gurunsi, and it seems to have offered great facilities to the surrounding raiders.

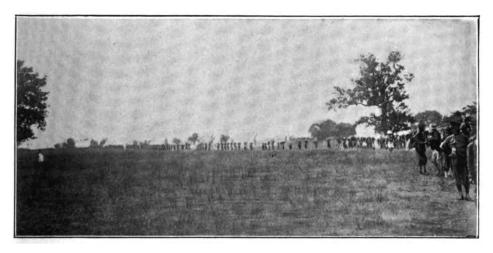
Over thirty years ago, one Gardiari mightily oppressed the people; when Gardiari died his mantle fell upon Barbatu, who, with a large following of free-lances, was already earning a dishonest living by periodically raiding the country of Gurunsi and its neighbourhood. As soon as a district has partially recovered from a previous visitation, and the natives have begun to amass a little property and collect a few wives, down comes Barbatu and makes a clean sweep.



The Prince Idi escorting us to Wa.

Wa itself still bore traces of a visit he had paid it eleven years before, and the King was apprehensive of another visit; but I hope and believe his Majesty slept more securely than hitherto under the ægis of the British flag which, as shown in the photograph (p. 492), is flying in front of his compound. In the course of a couple of days the news of the raiders' advance into Dagarti was confirmed, and I therefore sent them a warning to quit the country which was under our protection; as Barbatu protested his peaceful intentions, Ferguson went down to see

little success as it had done at times in a country much nearer home. The villagers, a plucky but turbulent race, with a confused idea of right and wrong, were not unlikely to welcome the stranger with a poisoned arrow between his ribs, a mode of treatment of which the Sofas had had unpleasant experience at Sankana, especially under cover of night. The Sofas were reduced on that occasion to surrounding their camp with a stockade, into which the natives were said to empty their quivers, with great satisfaction to themselves and little damage to the occu-



Our column entering Wa. (p. 489.)

him with a small escort, and insisted on his surrendering some twenty-five Dagartis which he had captured. In the middle of the night Barbatu arose, burned his camp, and fled.

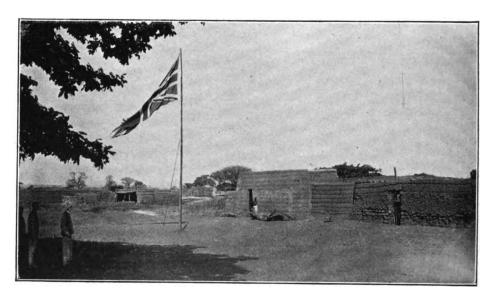
My duties now required me to travel into the more northerly part of our Hinterland, so I started off with a small escort, and the necessary number of carriers, leaving the rest of my party at Wa. In that part of the country I was now to traverse civilisation was, with the exception of the larger towns, at a very low ebb. Since the sacking of Wa, the central authority had been greatly weakened, and the King's writ ran with as

pants. Personally I cannot say that they gave me any annoyance, and I reached Gurunsi without any incident worth mentioning. The first place I reached was Dasima, which I found surrounded by a substantial wall with many loop-holes, and I was told that any young blood who had managed to buy or steal a Dane gun was entitled, as a sign of manhood, to make a loop-hole in the wall, through which he might discharge his piece at Barbatu or any other big game that came that way.

Of the political part of the business I shall not speak, but the people of Dasima were very pleased to see me, saying that

they knew all about me and my treatment of Barbatu, and they seemed to be particularly surprised that I had, as they expressed it, "taken the prey out of the lion's mouth," referring in this allegorical way to the rescue of the Dagarti captives.

Between eight and nine o'clock that evening we were taken on to one of the highest roofs of the town, from which we were shown reflected in the sky the lights of two large camps at a considerable disquarrelled with Amrahia's brother, and killed some of his followers, his lieutenant, who happened to be absent from the camp at the time of the occurrence, refused to return, and raised a small army on his own account. It is needless to say that, Barbatu being by no means a persona grata in Gurunsi, Amrahia had little difficulty in obtaining the support of most of the inhabitants, the only exception of importance being Dolbejan, one of the oldest kings; and he gave us, as a



The King's House, Wa, with British Flag flying. (p. 491.)

tance from the town, but apparently close to each other. These we were told were the lights from the rival camps of banditti under Barbatu and Amrahia respectively. The former I have already mentioned, so I will therefore give some account of the rival Autolycus.

Amrahia, when young, had been captured by Barbatu, in whose service he had won promotion, eventually rising to be one of his Chief Captains, being distinguished by the nickname of Mai-Yaki, a Haussa word meaning literally "full of fight," i.e., "the warrior."

About two years ago Barbatu, having

reason for not doing so, his opinion that Amrahia was as big a rascal as his late august master, and that he did not trust him, being by no means sure that, for all his professions, Codlin was any better friend than Short.

Amrahia so far claims to have had the best of the fighting, which has been going on pretty well ever since, but as both sides are just as ready for the fray as ever, it seems more than probable that the rivals, like the leaders of mercenary bands in the Middle Ages, were careful not to do each other any unnecessary damage.

A photograph will be given with my

next article of the King of Dasima, who was a portly gentleman with a chain round his neck, and, as will be seen, is surrounded by his principal courtiers. Clothes in this part of the country are not conspicuous for either quality or quantity.

Our stay at Dasima lasted for two days, and we left early one morning for Bologu, having first assured the people that we would endeavour to prevent Barbatu from molesting them.

Early next morning we arrived at Bologu, which seemed to have been a much larger and more important town than Dasima, boasting of two walls, one close to the town and the other at some distance from it, between which cattle could be reared and crops grown for the benefit of defenders in time of need. These walls, now in ruins, were of considerable height and thickness, and were reported to have kept Barbatu at bay for three years.

Not far off the inner wall we passed a small pond in which there were several small crocodiles, varying in length from five to seven feet, which are strictly preserved and regarded as sacred. I was informed that at night time they often take a stroll about the town, and on the strength of this information, I was very careful that evening to see that the opening of my tent was securely fastened, especially as our tents were pitched close to the gateway through which these festive Saurians entered.

At this town we heard the same old story of the evil doings of Barbatu which had been told us at Dasima, and indeed at every inhabited village of Gurunsi. Formerly, they said, they were able to carry on a trade with Wa, bartering their cattle for cloths and other necessaries; but now the rearing of cattle or horses was merely providing ground-bait to attract Barbatu to their neighbourhood. I left late on

the following afternoon for Leo, which, like most of the other towns in this neighbourhood, is surrounded by a wall, and contains many of the conical roofed huts built by that wandering tribe, the Foulahs.

My photograph* shows the King and principal inhabitants collected for palaver, the King being distinguished by a white robe—and what looks like a lady's summer hat—whilst on his left is seated a brother of Amrahia, the chief of condottieri, who has been previously mentioned. The substance of their representations was, as usual, "God send us help from Barbatu."

At Tumu, which I next visited, I was informed that I was the first white man they had ever seen, and the same was repeated to me when I arrived at Yela. Here I received friendly messages from Amrahia asking me to visit him, which I accordingly did; I was met on the way by this Chief, with about a hundred horsemen and escorted to his camp at Bechongsi. With him I had a good deal of conversation of a political nature, as to his dealings with Samory and others, Amrahia stating, however, that he was only the dependent of the various kings of Gurunsi. Amrahia will be seen sitting to the right in my photograph,* the central figure being his principal, Chief Gbelu, with whom it was said he was on indifferent terms. a short stop I proceeded to the next village, a place rejoicing in the name of Kawunachi, which I found in ruins. During the night we spent at this place we were visited by a fine rogue elephant, whom we heard trumpeting, and saw rollicking about all night in our vicinity.

In accordance with custom, I sent a messenger to the redoubtable Barbatu, who was encamped about ten miles off, informing him that I should visit him next day. I according started off with my escort, consisting of sixteen men, and arrived at his camp about

Owing to pressure upon our space we have been compelled to hold over some of Lieut, Henderson's photographs until the next article.—[Ed. Idlan.]

ten a.m., where I found him with about five thousand followers. I found him in the middle of his camp, surrounded by his chiefs, and apparently rather surprised to see me. My message to him was not particularly palatable to so great a chief, namely, that, as I had previously warned him he was not to raid Dagarti, so he was now to leave Gurunsi unmolested. He seemed surprised, and asked me where he was to go, to which I replied that that was not my business, but that I was to inform him that he was to abstain from raiding Gurunsi, unless he wished to be forcibly ejected. He expressed a wish that I should discuss the question with him, but I declined that pleasure, and, after repeating once more my warning, I made my way out of his camp, followed to its outskirts by a number of evil-looking scoundrels who begged me to retrace my steps. As my escort was so small, I was not sorry to find myself outside this den of freebooters; though I understand from information afterwards received that Barbatu sat up the greater part of the night discussing the situation with his Privy Council of predatory ruffians.

Having finished my tour and accomplished its object, I turned back in the direction of my headquarters for the time being at Wa, which I had left in charge of Captain Irvine. Shortly after starting out on this return journey I was attacked by dysentery, from which, and its aftereffects, I did not get wholly rid until I had left the coast for England. I managed, however, to continue my march, as I was anxious to reach Wa with as little delay as possible, especially as Doctor Part had remained behind there, and the only medical adviser I had with me was a native dresser.

Our stores had nearly run out, and milk, which forms the diet prescribed by the faculty, was almost unobtainable. I could not, however, have had a kinder nurse than Ferguson, who literally scoured the country to obtain milk for me, from nearly anything he could find that was female and walked on four legs. His knowledge of the climate and the diseases made him especially anxious that I should not quench my thirst with water, a beverage harmful under any circumstances.

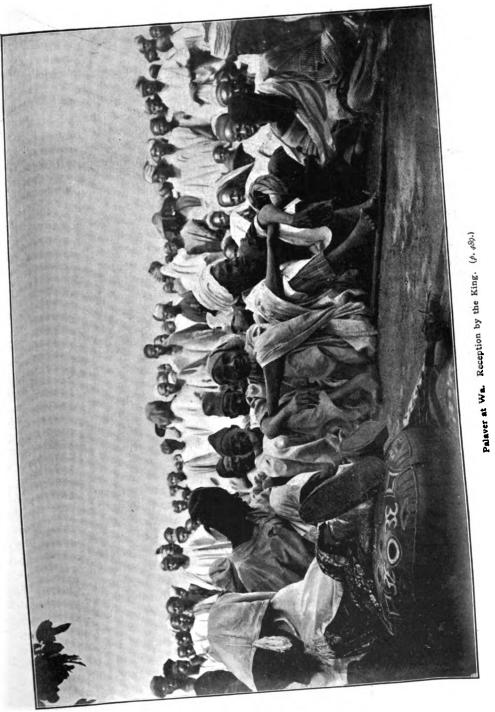
The country of Gurunsi, which we were now leaving, is purely agricultural, the inhabitants being a peaceful and inoffensive race, who asked for nothing and wanted nothing, except to follow their pursuits undisturbed. One of my photographs, * which is interesting and characteristic, shows a bevy of native women bringing back water from a pool. Their dress is the most primitive that can possibly be imagined, as it consists simply and literally of leaves, and not very many of them.

I reached Wa on the evening of the sixth day, after a quiet and uneventful journey. The next day I inspected the camp and found that my people had settled down comfortably, the Haussas having built for themselves their usual huts, which are constructed of stout rude poles, cut from the nearest trees, the spaces between them being filled up with grass; and the whole thing roofed in with the same material. The photograph* shows the Haussas in the act of constructing their lines, the white man in uniform being Captain Irvine, who was in command of the escort.

At this time I received many complaints from the inhabitants of the conduct of a small body of Sofas whom I had found at Wa on my return; and who had remained there since, to the discomfort of the rightful occupants. I sent for their Chief Ali, and asked him the nature of his business at Wa. He responded, with an air of injured innocence, that he was doing nothing, and I then told him that in that case the best thing he could do would be to return to his master at Bona.

^{*} This will appear next month.





He departed with his band, but apparently thinking it a pity to return empty handed, he seized on the way thirteen of the inhabitants of Wa. The news was brought to me that evening, and by daybreak Captain Irvine and thirty Haussas were on their way to recover them; they overtook the Sofas at Kulmase, the border town of Dagarti, and made them disgorge their prey.

In fact, at this time also, I was receiving complaints from all round, and deputations came in amongst others from the Lobis, and also from the Bonas, who had taken refuge with them when their own capital was forcibly occupied by the Sofas. Samory's son seemed to have turned Bona into a kind of permanent headquarters for his robber army. This son is named Saranga-Mori; he is Samory's son by his chief wife, and he is spoken of as Fămadeh, which means "prince," it being considered a sort of high treason to speak of h m by his own name, and any Sofa who did so would assuredly lose his head.

I was informed that of late Samory had been displeased at his son's inaction, and had sent him a message telling him that if he did not occupy Wa, he would "take him off his stool and give him a hoe." Samory seems to have felt very much the same sort of virtuous indignation at idleness in his son as arose in the breast of Mr. Fagin when he noticed that failing in his pupils.

Samory himself was living at Jimini in the Hinterland of the French Ivory Coast, where he appeared to be leading a quiet and settled existence after his somewhat stormy career. He had a smaller army there under his second son Molai, but to all appearances he was quietly cultivating the ground, while the bulk of his army, under his eldest son, was raiding the neighbouring districts and sending him from time to time a proportion of the plunder.

Some years ago Samory occupied a large district much farther west at the back

of Sierra Leone, which is marked on the maps of the time as Samory's Empire, but he was subsequently dislodged from there by the French.

Although invariably addressed and designated as the King, and assuming all the pomp and state of royalty, it is said that as a matter of fact he was originally only the son of a petty trader. interesting individual is also frequently styled by his people the Almamy or High Priest, as he is by profession a Mohammedan, though in many respects his observance of that religion is rather It is true he says his prayers seven times a day according to the Mussulman forms, and that the detection of the use of wine and spirits exposes the offender to the risk of capital punishment, but the women go unveiled, and their other habits and manners rather resemble the native African than the orthodox Mohammedan.

The bulk of his followers, though Mohammedan in name, observe the precepts of the Prophet even less than their Chief, and taking them altogether they are a mongrel lot of no particular nationality, and with very little Arab blood in them.

A few of the chiefs are unmistakably Arab, and contrast strongly with the common herd; to this class belonged my old acquaintance Abu Bukari Demba, whom I was destined to meet again, and who showed something of the character and traits of an Arab gentleman.

As I said, the deputation came from the Lobis to say that the Sofas were expected to make a raid upon their country, and asking for help; moreover, this information tallied with what I had been led to anticipate. As we had a treaty with the people of this country and they had a right to look to us for protection, I came to the conclusion that my best course was to go with a portion of my force and occupy Dawkita, an important town near their frontier, in the hope that my presence would be sufficient to deter the Sofas from

a hostile invasion of a country where the British flag was displayed.

I had reason to expect enthusiastic and substantial support from the people of this thickly populated country, who are a plucky and warlike race, as the Sofas, with whom they had a long-standing account to settle, found to their cost on a previous occasion.

These Lobis present rather a singular

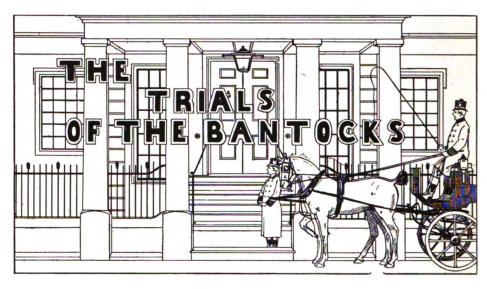
appearance. They are fine big athletic men, with no clothes except a small covering in front, and, in the case of the aristocrats of the race, a coating of red paint, and a gourd bedecked with feathers on the head. Next month I shall tell the tale of this mission and how I was made a prisoner, together with the manner in which I eventually returned to the coast.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]









BY G. S. STREET.

ILLUSTRATED BY MALCOLM PATTERSON.

PREFACE.

N struggling manhood, as in complacent youth, I have always been fascinated by the Bantock family. We are apt to generalise too freely from meagre experience, and therefore I hesitate to say that all youth is chiefly attracted by exterior things. I had better admit, simply, that my own was so, and the fact that everything in the Bantock household was admirably correct appealed strongly to my youthful sympathies. I say this in humility, not pretending that the excellent qualities of mind and heart possessed by all the Bantocks in their different ways, qualities which I am come in maturer years to understand and venerate, were apparent to my boyish vision. Their town house was in an envied part of London; their country house was the largest and most dignified of its part of a large and dignified county; their dinners were sumptuous but always in good taste; their butler was wonderfully episcopal. Their ancestry, to be sure, did not excite one's imagination, but they went everywhere at the right time and in the most comfortable fashion, and sometimes took me with them. Mr. and Mrs. Bantock alike had a large and unwavering dignity; Maud Bantock's dress—she was seventeen at the time of which I am thinking—was always in the latest fashion and sometimes dazzling; Russell Bantock, my contemporary, was a notable personage at school and in all the best clubs of "the House" in my unpretentious days at Oxford; even Tom, my junior by some years, was always careful to do the right thing in the right way.

It was, as I have said, such exterior things as these—to the exclusion of what is nobler and better still—which fascinated my youth, to my shame or not, as your memory may determine. And even now, when (as I think) the true goodness and beauty of the Bantock life are apparent to me, I am not uninfluenced by the former

considerations. In the hardship and anxiety which beset the life of one who writes for bread, it is refreshing and comfortable to turn aside to such a house as the Bantocks'. There one feels that after all there is something solid and permanent in life. As I look down their flowered dinner-table and note the gently-smiling, untroubled faces, and glance aside to the noiseless footmen and imperturbable butler, I feel that, though my

death that the Bantocks might continue to have all their little comforts about them. I regret the old days of the patron, and that Mr. Bantock is not mine. He would not read my books, perhaps, any more than he does now, but to feel that my connection with him was something stable and official would be an enduring joy. As things are, if I failed to command a tolerably good-looking suit of clothes, and a shirt that would stand exposure, the



He generally reads the evening paper.

own attic crust may haply vanish, so long as the Bantocks live they will dine well. When, trudging on weary feet along Piccadilly, I see Mrs. Bantock leaning back in her soft, swift carriage, and she smiles, faintly but perceptibly, upon me, I feel quite rested. I do not think that if I were reduced to extreme indigence the Bantocks—why should they?—would offer to support me, but somehow my acquaintance with them gives me a vague sense of security against fortune. Merely for this, if there were ever a serious crusade against the rich, I would fight to the

Bantocks, though most kind, would, quite excusably—ah, horrible thought! So, you see, the exterior life of the Bantocks fascinates me still, though I know now how little that is in comparison with their inward worth. And yet, sometimes—is it envy of their worldly blessings or a less vile despair of emulating the noble qualities that lie behind them?—sometimes—sometimes it is not altogether disagreeable to reflect that the Bantocks, they too, have their trials in life.

I have made a little collection of these trials, as I have heard of them at different times, and I propose to set them forth with a double object. I wish that people like myself-poor, shifting, unsubstantial people-may observe that even beings so solid and permanent as the Bantocks are tried by fortune: it will be a great consolation. I wish also that

they, the aforesaid poor and unconsidered, may see and perpend with what fortitude the Bantocks bear their trials, with what ease they dismiss them: it will be a great stimulus. And to make all things clearer, I shall unfold, as I touch on each individually, the qualities of the Bantocks. m y friends. Skill may fail me, but never sympathy.

Mr. Bantock's Thorn.

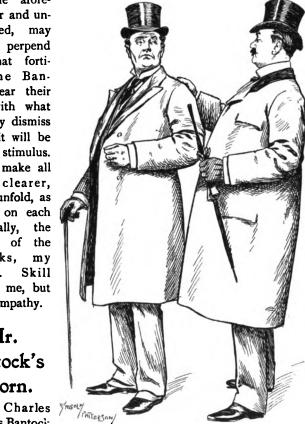
Mr. Augustus Bantock is the senior part-

ner in a flourishing and old-established bank, and is in other ways a person whom we all have a natural tendency to admire and love. His father was not a very rich man, and he started life with barely eight hundred a year (he has often told me), and the interest of his maternal uncle, the head of the bank already mentioned. This uncle died when Mr. Bantock was forty years old, and left him a fortune of twelve thousand a year: he was already a partner in the bank. He

has been often heard to express his gratitude to Providence that he did not inherit this money when he was a young man, because it might have been his ruin, and poor young men who hear him are greatly encouraged by this to make money, in the hope that they, too, may inherit more.

He speaks kindly to such young men. "It's an uphill fight, I know," he sometimes says. "I know it; I've been through the mill. When I started life I had barely eight hundred a year." I do not think it has ever occurred to him that it is possible to have less than that, and one shrinks from hurting his kindly feelings by telling him so.

Mr. Bantock is very different from the man of business whom we find as typical in the books of the last generation. He is well educated, having taken a pass degree at Oxford, and a keen



Sometimes even slapping him on the back.

sportsman, generally going to see the Oxford and Cambridge cricket match at Lord's, and playing golf nearly every week when it is fine. He is understood to have a hobby of a serious nature. I think (but am not sure) that it has something to do with science. He never speaks of it, no doubt from modesty. He is of medium height, broad-shouldered and somewhat stout, clean shaven and benevolent of aspect; he dresses carefully, and has a magnificent fur coat; he is a good husband

and father, though he is rightly careful not to give his younger sons too much pocket-money, lest they might be tempted to be extravagant and run into debt; he is passionately loyal to his sovereign.

Mr. Bantock's habits are extremely

attractive. He breakfasts always at nine, and is in the City by eleven; he seldom leaves it before four o'clock, and allows himself one hour only for lunch at his City club. In the afternoon he plays whist his club in Pall Mall, for small points, not to encourage gambling, and at seven walks to his house in Grosvenor Place for exercise. After dinner, in spite of the brain-pressure of the day, he generally reads the evening paper, while somebody plays the piano, or even occasionally goes to the theatre with his wife and daughters, thus doubling their enjoyment of the entertainment. On Sundays he invariably goes to church in the morning, being of opinion that even in town it is a good example, and in the afternoon he sits in his library, which is furnished with all the standard works, and a collection of the Nineteenth Century, to which so many well-known people con-

with red labels. I cannot tell you what he reads, but when Lord Tennyson died, I heard him say that there were no real poets left. On Sunday, too, if there is no dinner-party, he goes to bed early in the evening. On Saturday afternoons, when the weather is fine, he goes to Wimbledon to play golf.

tribute, bound in dark green

Yet even in this beautiful and useful life there are trials; and, in particular, I remember a thorn in Mr. Bantock's side, a man called Merryweather.

Merryweather was Mr. Bantock's contemporary, and had been his form mate at Harrow. He used to tell, I believe, some ridiculous story of his having saved Mr. Bantock's life while bathing—I say ridiculous, because it is difficult to imagine that even at that early age Mr. Bantock was so imprudent as to risk the safety of his person. However this may have been, it was no justification for a



Mrs. Bantock cannot refer to it without emotion.

man in Merryweather's position—he had failed in life, and was the secretary of an obscure and precarious club of a sporting character—when he met Mr. Bantock in the street, calling out, "Hullo, Bantock!" I question if there was another man in London, not of an assured position in society, who would have called Mr. Bantock "Bantock." But Merryweather had no subtle preceptions. He looked raffish, with his hat on one side, and seemed entirely to lack

that reserve which is so rightly valued a feature of the English character. He laughed quite loudly in the street; if he argued with a cabman it was not in the tone of quiet authority which you and I use, but in the high-pitched voice of one who loves a contest. He was altogether unsuited to be Mr. Bantock's acquaintance. But ten years ago, Mr. Bantock, in a moment of thoughtless generosity, asked him to dinner. I met him on that occasion; I was young at the time, but even then my sympathetic instinct divined the horror of the Bantock family. Merryweather was excited; he laughed uproariously; he told foolish stories about people I am sure Mrs. Bantock would not care to meet. Nothing could stop him. Mrs. Bantock looked at him; Mr. Bantock looked at him; Russell Bantock looked at him; I looked at him; Merryweather went on.

Of course he was not asked again; and, indeed, never again passed the threshold of Grosvenor Place. Both Mrs. Bantock and Russell Bantock spoke seriously to Mr. Bantock of the unwisdom of knowing him; and Mr. Bantock, who, in spite of his position, was a genuinely humble-minded man, was guided in such matters by his family. He tried to avoid Merry-weather, but—through timidity, his wife hinted, but I know his kindness of heart was the cause—could not bring himself absolutely to cut his unfortunate acquaintance; indeed, he would have found it extremely difficult to do so.

He was cruelly requited for his kindness; for Merryweather was continually meeting him in Pall Mall and elsewhere, greeting him with a noisy laugh, and sometimes even slapping him on the back. I have seen the victim of such a shoulder-slapping ruffian turn round and strike his assailant; but Mr. Bantock was too gentle for this. He would nod, courteously but with finality, and pass on. But Merryweather would not allow this; he would walk by his side

telling him atrocious stories, and, as it were, involving Mr. Bantock in his unseemly joviality. Sometimes Mr. Bantock would take refuge in a cab, thus missing the exercise so necessary to his health. I have known him arrive in Grosvenor Place quite unnerved. There was one terrible scene, when Mr. and Mrs. Bantock, with Lord and Lady Addleshaw, were dining at the Savoy, previously to going to the play. Merryweather passed their table, on his way to a party of quite odd-looking people (Mrs. Bantock told me), and greeting Mr. Bantock loudly, as usual, slapped him so violently on the back that the glass of sherry he was in the act of drinking was upset into his soup. It must have been a dreadful moment; Mrs. Bantock cannot refer to it without emotion. am glad I was not there. On another occasion, while Mr. and Mrs. Bantock were walking in the Park, Merryweather's large dog, recognising in Mr. Bantock a person with whom his master often spoke, raced up to them, and (it was a very muddy day, I regret to add) put his paws on Mr. Bantock's white waistcoat. There were other instances almost as distressing, but I cannot bring myself to relate them. Enough to say that for several years Merryweather continued to be a thorn in Mr. Bantock's blameless flesh.

But like all trials patiently endured, this one came to an end. Merryweather sank even lower, lost his appointment, and had a serious illness. Then the true nobility of a forgiving spirit shone forth in the Bantocks. Mrs. Bantock gave me a commission to buy a pound of grapes, and to leave them at Merryweather's door with her card. And when Merryweather was well again, Mr. Bantock got him a small post in a bank, connected with Mr. Bantock's own, in the Colonies, and he has troubled my friends no more. Mr. Bantock's dignity under the infliction of Merryweather was one of the grandest things I have ever seen.

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Richard Wagner's house, "Wahnfried," in Bayreuth.

BY WILLIAM F. S. WALLACE.

No. I.—THE MUSICAL PLAN.

I F a census were taken of the name that occurs most frequently in the literature of the day, taking all countries of the world together, that name would be found to be Richard Wagner. Wherever we turn in our reading we see it before us.

It is not the name of one who by right of conquest extended the frontier of an Empire; it is not a name associated with some new scientific discovery to benefit the human race; it is not a name to sway the political passions of a nation. It is the name, simply, of a man who dwelt in the serener atmosphere of art, whose warfare was against conventions, whose science was the expansion of the realm

of music, whose political creed was the enforcing of the faith in himself.

We find ourselves face to face with the fact that a man who has given birth to a literature, devoted entirely to himself and his work, is a personage to be reckoned with, whether we confess ourselves wild partisans of his or uncompromising antagonists. Wagner was a many-sided man. It may be that philosophers differ from Richard Wagner the thinker and pamphleteer; that poets find in Richard Wagner's word-books many verses that are trivial and commonplace; that dramatists resent his defiant intrusion into regions hitherto sacrosanct; but even his most violent detractors will admit that Richard Wagner the composer was a giant who reformed out of oldestablished conventions a new art, and who brought his philosophy, his poetry, his dramatic fibre, to bear upon this new art, which, under his hand, music became.

The Variety of his Work. Wagner's music apart from the other mental phases which he made subservient to it: for every current of this extraordinary brain led towards the achievement of its single purpose—namely, the Music Drama,—absorbing every issue that could in any way augment the tide of inspiration.

So it is that in entering upon any serious consideration of his work it is a matter of difficulty to separate his poetic conception from his music. Unlike Beethoven, Mozart, and the older composers, Wagner was educated to his fingertips: as a thinker he anticipated a profound system of philosophy; as a student of literature he was acquainted with all the great schools; as a musician he was deeply read in the works of those composers who have left their mark upon periods in the progress of the art.

It is well to emphasise this in studying the man. He was no charlatan making a specious display of superficial knowledge—the immensity of his work refutes any such charge. His prose writings fill many volumes, and there is hardly a page that does not bear the impress of deep thought, that does not challenge thought in reply. Many a man has rested content with spending a lifetime in covering the ground which this extraordinary man set himself to overtake in his prose writings alone. What then are we to say to the texts of his music-dramas, to his pre-occupation as the founder of what is practically a new art, to the hundreds upon hundreds of pages of his full-scores, where not one of the myriads of notes is left to chance?

The mere physical labour of writing, apart from creating these colossal works, seems the occupation of several lifetimes.

The apparent impossibility made it possible.

His reach was so wide that it comprised the best thoughts of all great men who had gone before him: nothing was too trivial for him so long as he learned from it. He had no teachers save "art and life," as he himself said, but so great was his absorption of all that was worth knowing, so lavishly did he give it forth in his work, that to deal intimately and at any length with his music is to write a history of the art.

To trace such steps as led His Method, him to the Temple which he made for himself at Bayreuth, would demand infinite patience on the part of the reader as well as a good deal more space than is at the disposal of the writer. It seems more to the present purpose to summarise the methods which he followed in his music, to strip the subject of all speculation and technicalities, with the hope of bringing the Master a little nearer those who say he is "quite beyond" them.

After all it matters little to us at present what he thought of this or that, what abstract questions occupied his mind, what philosophic problems he felt called upon to solve. Possibly he diverted a good deal of public appreciation by attaching too great importance to points which should have grown out of, not into, his music, points which have served only to distract and estrange many of his auditors and to rouse their antagonism. There was hardly a theme too abstruse for him: from vegetarianism to Buddhism he felt it his mission to give to his patient friends, and ultimately to a patient world, his own peculiar thoughts. These we may put on one side. From first to last his music is the main thing.

The Old Style of 'twenties and 'thirties, nay, unfortunately a good deal later—that which was called lyric drama was mostly lyric, seldom drama. Plot, as

such, presupposed a sublime indifference to consistency on the part of the singer or dramatist, a sweet credulity on the part of the audience. The dramatic scheme consisted in linking together a series of detached movements, solos, arias, duets, concerted pieces, and finales, so as to afford composer and singers opportunities for their special talents. The heroine, instead of dying like a sensible person, was in the habit of breaking off into a long disquisition upon things in general: love scenes took place under the most impossible, not to mention dangerous, circumstances; disguises were assumed so palpable that only the veriest idiot would have been imposed upon—in a word, "opera" was a delightful game of makebelieve, an excuse for general conversation in the boxes, and a letting off of top-notes for the benefit of the gallery.

Yet for some inscrutable reason, fashion's vagaries being the most inscrutable of all things, the public tolerated this. One can see the frowns on the face of a man of Wagner's temperament. fused to be shrieked at spasmodically by the prima donna while the other people on the stage were waiting till the lady had got her bouquet. For a man born and bred in the atmosphere of the theatre, it is remarkable that he should have had such a contempt for "professionalismus." The prima donna, he reflected, is a necessary evil, but she must be kept in her place; the tenor, not a man, but a disease, as Von Bülow said, will have to forget the footlights.

But it was not solely against the interpreters that his reforms were directed; the old system and principles of "opera" were false, rotten, and must be swept away.

Recognising the place that The Germ the ancient Greek Drama of his Music Drama. held as a factor of national life, he aimed at creating something which to-day would fulfil a somewhat similar func-The cry of "elevating the masses"

was not his; his mission was not to bring art to every man's door, but to make every man wait upon art.

There was to be no question of "brightening the home-life"; whatever might be the outcome of his labours, the principles which he enforced were not in the direction of mere enjoyment; more plainly, his works were not to be submitted to audiences who desired to be entertained after their daily toil.

Just as the Greek Drama was an epitome of all that was noble and heroic in national mythology, and was celebrated as a national festival, so Wagner attempted to create for modern times a dramatic form which should unite all the arts and be specially adapted to modern needs. The progress towards this was gradual, the idea did not spring up in a day. Wagner did not go to work with the requirements of the impresario, the demands of the singers, the returns of the box-office perpetually before him.

Having convinced himself that the artificiality of opera would not serve him, and seeking for some consistency in characterisation, he demolished the old structure. The pointless division of an act into arbitrary sections clogged action, and afforded opportunity for nothing except vocal display, therefore the music was to be made continuous, so that each act would be complete in itself.

Working to this idea he saw that the old method of recitative accompanied by chords could be got rid of, and that the links between the more definite, more important dramatic episodes could be bridged over by music which proceeded continuously. Instead, therefore, of pulling up the band short after some big solo or duet and waiting for the inevitable encore, then going on again with some utterly absurd ejaculations about the interspersed with business in hand, thumping chords from the orchestra, Wagner obliterated all the seams, so to speak, and made each act a solid

continuous honest web, instead of a piece of patchwork.

Hitherto the orchestra has taken the lowest order in the hierarchy of lyric drama; but the usages of Donizetti and other barrel-organists were to be done away with. It was to become something more than a mere machine, to form a vital part of the organism, in fact, and the means for interpreting the significance of the action.

This was done by the emleitmotive. ployment of "leit-motive,"*
a system which has been
adopted by every modern composer, and
which is simply the equivalent in music
drama of the symphonic style followed in
purely orchestral music.

A popular explanation of these "leading phrases" might be this. When an actor has once appeared on the stage we recognise him again by his face and dress. that is, by means of our eyes. We recognise him further by his speaking in a manner consistent with his earlier utterances, that is, our mind recognises him by his thoughts. But if he speaks or sings while the orchestra gives forth a definite tune or musical phrase identified with and reflecting the thought of the actor, our ear catches what the eye and mind have already perceived, and such a musical phrase becomes a "leit-motif." Having arrived at this it is a simple matter to Take "Othello" for carry it further. instance. If at every allusion to the handkerchief some one were to clash a pair of cymbals together, or to play a familiar tune, such a noise or air would come irresistibly to be identified with the handkerchief, and so would constitute its "leit-motif." So in "The Ring" when in the dialogue a sword is spoken of, the orchestra plays a tune which Wagner meant to be symbolical of a sword. He did not attempt to do the impossible, to represent by means of music a picture of a sword, he strove only to produce a *mental* image of it by means of a musical phrase which after being repeated once or twice came to be connected with the idea of a sword. Thus the orchestra becomes a footnote to the text, and as we hear the phrases constantly repeated they form finger-posts to the dramatist's idea.

I have said that the system The Sym- of "leit-motive" was an outphonic Style. come of the symphonic style, the highest development of anything in music. Standing above "opera" in that it calls for no adventitious aids, it is self-supporting and self-centred. Now, one of Wagner's early loves was Beethoven, who brought the symphony to its maturity as a purely intellectual conception. So Wagner reasoned with himself: a symphony is the name given to a piece of music, usually in four parts or movements; each part is a dissertation in music upon two or more tunes or musical phrases which recur with various modifications, texts, as it were, for a musical discourse. Now, I write a drama which has two or more motives running through it, why should not I combine the one with the other, and make my orchestra perform symphonies while my characters act dramas? Each "leit-motif" will correspond to a symphonic "subject" or phrase, and I will develop these according to dramatic demands. The dialogue will explain the music, and the music will explain the dialogue.

He had therefore to substitute something for the old arias and duets and recitatives, and this he did by means of a combination of thematic material.

His Melody. Wagner's work left out all the tune. Now, as music cannot exist without melody, it seems rather odd that one should still have to insist on its importance in the Wagnerian scheme.

As a tune with a refrain, as direct and

It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that this term is not Wagner's.

stupid as the preposterous stuff that is shot at the public nowadays, as something which can be screwed into a barrelorgan, Wagner's melody certainly is not; there are grades of Taste in music even as in other arts. To reject Wagner's highly developed melody is as foolish as to scorn George Meredith because he

does not contribute to Tit-Bits. Some peopleadmire the picture on chocolatebox; others will look at nothing but the works of Velasquez. It is easy to class that kind of appreciation, but no one seems to perceive that he is exposing his own poor mental calibre when he confesses an admiration for the chocolatebox style of music.

Wagner employed melody as a part of the complete structure, not as a

all methods to the perfection of his ideas.

Many complain of the absence of set

Many complain of the absence of set melody in his work. Now, in writing melody a composer has to beware of the facility of the thing. It is possible to be led away by the purely sensuous tide of inspiration and to keep an endless flow

of tune. This

may be plea-

sant to the

hearer, but

the composer, before his

work reaches

his audience,

has to submit

to that most

Wagner and his son Siegfried.

(From a photograph by Gross, by permission o, Messrs. F. Bruckmann & Co., Munich.)

series of detached tunes, but as an organic element definitely related to the whole. In embroidering the fabric of his music he simply carried the symphonic method of Beethoven a step further, making each movement—each act—more elaborate in design. From Bach and his treatment of the fugue he learned how to superimpose one theme on another and to employ

for midable, most pitiless of all critics — namely, himself. To a composer the temptation is strong to lose himself in a Swinburnian lush of melody, to turn on the tap and pour it forth inconsequentially without regard to context or structure, just as when the trick of epigram is

darting, like a shuttle, backwards and forwards in a writer's brain, it demands an effort to come back to pure reason.

Far from scorning melody, Wagner used it with the most refined discretion and sense of proportion, weaving it in and out and making it so intimate a part of the fabric that without it the music would fall to pieces. The old assertion was that in "Die Meistersinger," Wagner had but one tune in his head, and wrote an entire opera on it. To a past generation, reared on the ineffable inanities of an artificial school, this might have appeared so, but the statement was stupid. The melody of the "Prize Song" is the key to the plot, it moves with the development of the scheme, and only reaches its maturity at the very end of the opera. Wagner's melody therefore is employed in accordance with symphonic procedure, gaining thereby a freedom and latitude in treatment which the old set form of "opera" could not permit.

It may be stating a paradox Melos. to say that while the human ear seeks for melody as the highest expression in music, there are times when it may become so sated with it that it will reject it, even although there may be no falling off in its quality. It was Mozart (was it not?) who said that the most effective thing in music was no music. The musical plan is always founded upon contrasts, and the continuity of a movement demands change of key, of rhythm, of time, digressions to which the musician's instinct is intensely sensitive.

This continuity, however, in Wagner's scheme called for moments of repose, for what he styled "Melos." By this was meant the use of episodical matter; that is to say, after a tune has been given forth it is continued by a series of bars which imitate some salient quality of rhythm, or of a characteristic phrase sufficiently striking to be recognised in an altered This expatiating on the theme bears the name of episode, and by means of this he linked together the important sections of his acts. Where a lyrical feeling predominated he did not hesitate to use melody to the full; in the dramatic parts he relied upon "Melos."

Hitherto I have said noth-The Voice. ing about the singing, but much of what has been stated in regard to the treatment of melody and

the orchestra applies to the voices as well. Wagner laid stress on the fact that he wanted acting in preference to purely vocal virtuosity, and he gained his end by making his voice parts chiefly declamatory, so that they approach, in singing, as nearly as possible the inflections of the words. To a German, or one thoroughly acquainted with German, the singer appears merely to be speaking the text in a somewhat exaggerated style. There is an intimate union between the cadences of the music and the syllables of the words, the vowelisation in fact, and the full effect of this is lost when the parts are sung in any other language than that in which they were originally written.

In spite of this extremely close relationship the music can stand as a concrete whole independent of the voice, as the concert-room performance of the various selections proves. But in the scenic representation what is sung is made of more importance than the individuality of him who sings, and no opportunity is afforded for a display of special talents at the expense of dramatic consistency.

There is a popular notion that Wagner's style of writing for the voice ruins all good organs; not all, or there would be no one left to sing his roles, but it will spoil voices that are not suited to it. It does not follow that a boy will turn out a good cricketer because he plays tennis rather well.

It is not every voice that can take part in Wagnerian music, but the fact that there are singers who year after year have appeared in these dramas does not point to their voices having been permanently injured. The possession of a good voice does not mean success in this style of music. Jean de Reszke, essentially French in his training, has succeeded in giving us pre-eminently the finest rendering of Tristan and Siegfried, while others, not far behind him in ability and practice have failed as Brünnhilde. Beyond all others, Vogl, an old exponent of

to take the part of Loge, which he had sung twenty-one years before.

The cry that Wagner has ruined the human voice is the hoarse protest of those whose vocal organs are unable to sing his music. In Beethoven's "Choral Symphony" the voice parts are not a whit less exacting, yet we do not often hear any complaints made about them. natural that everyone should be ambitious to sing Wagner's music, for it confers a hall-mark not to be gained by performing the works of other composers. Exceptional gifts, however, are demanded, and it is not unusual for a singer—especially a woman-to have reached middle life before she has gained the capacity and experience for interpreting certain rôles.

Subjective Considerations. Thus far it has been my endeavour to deal with Wagner's music as objectively as possible. I have intentionally said

nothing about the subjective side, for that the listener must experience for himself. In studying his music we all begin alike: First we are in the stage of gentle ridicule, of quiet scepticism; then we reach the hectic stage of wild enthusiasm; when we are convalescent we begin to think. These words are written in the hope that intelligent interest may take the place of the first.

Wagner's treatment of the orchestra surpasses the work of all men. There is not a composition of to-day that does not show his influence. There is not a composer who has not openly or secretly acknowledged his indebtedness to him. Even Verdi, when he was thought to have reached a period when men's ideas are no longer subject to change, went to school again, and showed in his later works that the Wagnerian principle has not been without its particular lesson to him.

During a performance we may fidget

because we do not grasp the subtleties and meanderings of the dialogue. We may feel bored at the apparent absence of action, but the moment we close our eyes and let the mind rest upon that wonderful maze of sound, we are carried away by a thought greater than our own.

Intellectuality may stand aside, philosophy may be abandoned to the bookmen, but the music is there as the quintessence of human emotion, devised to recreate man's mind and awaken within it all the softening influences of life. are shades of appreciation and receptivity in mixed assemblages of people; some look askance at Wagner because they complain that his music is beyond them. The fault is theirs, not his. Yet it is a very striking fact that many of the master's most enthusiastic admirers are to be found among those who have no technical knowledge of music whatsoever. Surely this points to his music possessing qualities deserving of enquiry and consideration.

It is well to bear in mind what British taste once was; still is, perhaps. When Wagner was engaged in the composition of *Tristan* we were revelling in the unspeakable inanities of *Maritana* and *The Bohemian Girl*. The very mention of these works, the mere suggestion of their popularity, coupled with the fact that *Tristan* had to wait nearly thirty years before it became a stock piece at Covent Garden, ought to remind us that we have yet to make amends.

To many Wagner is a name simply, or his works seem a new thing; but this "new thing" which the composer's brain was weaving was completed before some popular composers of to-day were born. Wagner is a link with the past. He was writing tragedies when Beethoven died; yet it seems only yesterday that the news came that his eyes were gazing at new suns.

He saw the coming and the passing of various schools. He had to fight poverty, exile, political humiliation; yet he immortalised every man with whom he came in contact. He lived and died a rebel, yet he commanded the homage of kings, scorning the trumpery ribbon of a decoration, worshipping only the Highest. Is not such a man—however we may regard his work—worth a thought?

Sent 6 mi. 116.

Wagner's autograph, with the love "motif" of Tristan.

THE PIRATES OF THE SOLENT.

THE NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE IN COMPANY WITH THE POET AND THE BOOKMAKER; CONTAINING THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT, AND SOME ACCOUNT OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES; WITH OTHER STRANGE AND IMPROBABLE ADVENTURES: EXTRACTED FROM THE LOG OF THE "FOLLY."

BY ALLEN UPWARD.

ILLUSTRATED BY THOS. DOWNEY.

V.

BEMBRIDGE HARBOUR — CASUALTY AT SEA —
THE BOY'S MANUAL OF SEAMANSHIP—THE
MAGNATE — A HUMILIATING INCIDENT —
DISCOVERY OF THE MERMAID—MUTINY ON
THE HIGH SEAS — LOG OF THE BOOKMAKER.



is the only landlocked harbour in the
Isle of Wight. I discovered this in the
course of our circumnavigation.
Landlocked har-

bours are smoother than the other kind. By a coincidence we made Bembridge our headquarters for a longer time than any of the other ports we called at.

Theinhabitants of Bembridge are chiefly wreckers by profession. They lie in wait round the shores of their harbour, and when a vessel is wrecked they come off in boats and demand large sums for salvage.

Their harbour is admirably constructed for this purpose. It possesses one deep hole, somewhere about the middle, surrounded by a perfect network of mudbanks, forming a maze through which the most experienced mariners frequently fail to pick their way. It is no uncommon thing to see half a dozen craft sailing forth to take part in a race, and three out of the six stranded in or about the harbour

before the race is over. This lends a zest to the sport which is wanting in many places, and has naturally made the local sailing club the most popular anywhere round the coast.

I desire to speak of this club in a friendly spirit, and only wish that I could believe the feeling was mutual. The unfortunate incident which marked our arrival at Bembridge lends itself to easy explanation, and I cannot but think that the view taken of it by the committee of the club was harsh and prejudiced.

The Poet happened to be in command, and in order to show off, he insisted on taking the tiller as we neared the coast. To be perfectly frank, the Poet does not know how to steer, knows it no more than a camel, but after all every one must learn some time. As luck would have it, a race was being started outside the harbour just as we bore down on the spot; and the moment the Poet took the helm the Folly's mainsail flapped wildly, went off on the other side, and carried us right in among a fleet of small sailing craft as they were crossing the line.

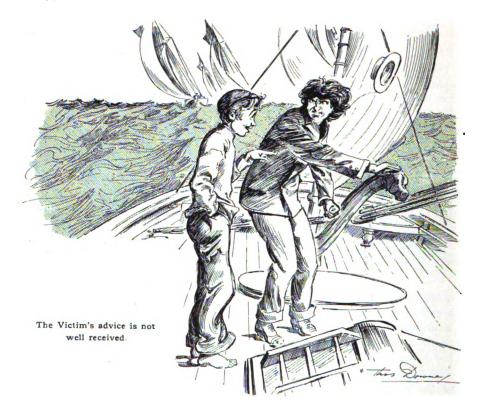
The result was that a certain number of these boats had to tack, or jibe, or do something to avoid us, thereby losing their places in front; and their owners stooped to use language which should not be used between brother yachtsmen. As the Poet said:

"If those men had addressed me in a courteous and conciliatory manner, I should have apologised, but now I'll see them drowned first."

He was poorly consoled by the smiles and nods of satisfaction from the men on the other boats which had passed safely under our lee, and thus stolen a march on their opponents.

But, I think, what irritated the Poet most was the indiscreet conduct of the Victim, who happened to be left alone on deck, and affectionately embraced one of the mudbanks which was lying about loose. The bump brought the Tyrant on deck, and the Poet steered no more that day.

Having put these facts before the reader I must go on to express my surprise that the committee of the club, to whom we had not been introduced, should have addressed us a letter, couched in terms calculated to provoke a breach of the



who seized the opportunity to come aft and advise the Poet to put his helm down.

The Poet turned on him with a violence foreign to his gentle nature.

"Look here, young un," he said, "I have stood the skipper's interference, but I draw the line at yours. Understand! I don't want a child in knickerbockers to teach me how to run this boat. Before I put my helm down to please a miserable cabin-boy I'll run her aground."

The Folly took him at his word, and

peace, and which were therefore illegal, and enclosing a copy of a work entitled The Boy's Manual of Seamanship for the use of Training Ships of the Royal Navy, with several offensive passages marked in red ink.

I print a few of these passages below. The preface consists of good advice to boys. Why, therefore, they should have underlined these passages in it I do not understand:

"When on shore avoid all intoxicating



drinks and the use of tobacco in every shape. Never enter a public-house." (I may remark in passing that we do not use tobacco in every shape. I doubt if any boy ever did, either. We only use it in the shape of cigars and gold flake).

The preface goes on to say:—"If you commence life in a Training Ship with dirty habits, inattention to your drills, and a disregard to good order when on shore, you will leave it with an indifferent character; if you start badly, you may be sure you will end your course badly; perhaps be dismissed the service with disgrace, or discharged from your first ship on paying off as an objectionable character, being ever after shunned by your old shipmates as a man unworthy of being known, thus becoming a burden to yourself, and die at an early age, unregretted and uncared for."

This is sound, though a bit depressing, and as it is written for the lower classes the grammar and construction need not be severely scrutinised. But what it had to do with us is simply inexplicable.

Other passages in this book did not seem so absolutely intelligible to me as, no doubt, they were to the writer, a distinguished naval officer. For instance:

"Q. How do you secure a roband?

"A. A roband is passed round the jack-stay, over, and under, and through the eyelet-hole in the head of the topsail, or any other square sail, and secured with a clove hitch."

Now, I have read that at least a dozen times, and thought over it at night, and still I do not understand how to secure a roband. I admit I have not the faintest idea of what a roband is. The fact is this book is not quite so elementary as it pretends to be. Here is another passage that sounds all right, and yet it has stumped me:

"How to make the Bend.—Pass the end of a rope through the bight of another rope, or through the becket of a block (what is the becket of a block?), or a

clew of a sail; then round both parts of the bight or becket, and take the end under its own part (what on earth does this mean?); it is sometimes put under twice, and the end stopped back to the standing part; also for bending topgallant and royal clewlines, jib and staysail downhauls."

He seems to wander off, so to speak, on another tack toward the end of the sentence. I can't help thinking that the punctuation is a little giddying. The writer is too anxious to get over the ground, it seems to me. When a fresh idea strikes him, he doesn't bring up; he just chucks



How to secure a roband—a simple explanation.

in a comma or a semicolon and goes right on without stopping for breath.

Here is another explanation which doesn't really explain so much as it pretends to:

"Running to Leeward. An expression used when a ship or boat, not having been able to weather any particular object, runs to keeward of it."

I am not vain, but I think I could explain the thing better than that. Unless the training-ship boys possess an acumen such as is rarely found in boys, or even in grown men, I cannot help thinking it would be worth while for the Admiralty to engage a respectable journalist, with a knowledge of English composition, to run over their instruction books, and render them a little less

impenetrable by the human reason. I am certain the following verbiage could be made to yield a meaning, probably an excellent one, if revised by a skilled hand:—

"Never go away in a boat without your shoes, as it will give your ship a slovenly name, as also smoking in a boat, lounging on the gunwale, hailing a ship or boat in passing, or the shore."

I do not say that that is the worst sentence ever written. There may be worse ones in this Manual itself; I have not read it through. But whether going without your shoes will give smoking in a boat a slovenly name, or whether it will give your ship smoking in a boat, is what that sentence does not make clear to my mind. Note the magnificent isolation of the closing words—"or the shore." Whether those words are to be connected with the boat, or the shoes, or the ship, or the slovenly name, or the other boat, or the gunwale, or the hailing, or the passing, I would give good money to know.

I will give one more extract. It is in answer to the question how to bend a jib. Before I read this book I thought it was a simple, easy thing to bend a jib. Now I would not undertake to bend a jib if you were to give me a thousand pounds.

"To bend a jib. Reeve the stay through all parts of the lacing, from head to tack, and then bend the reeving-line to the becket of the stay; reeve the downhaul up through the lacing, from tack to head, and bend it with a sheet-bend to the head of the sail; hook the halyards to the head-cringle, pass the bight of them under the foot, and all parts of the sail, and stop the bight to its own part, bend the clew-rope, pull up on the halyards, when high enough haul out on the reeving-line and downhaul, easing the halyards as required. Pass the tack-lashing, bend the jib-pendants, cast off the clewrope, put on jib-purchase, and set the stay up; cast off the bight of the halyards from round the jib, and hoist the sail."

When I got to the end of that sentence I bade *The Boy's Manual of Seamanship* a long farewell. Nothing will ever convince me that there is not swearing hidden away somewhere in that paragraph. It sounds like bad language, and I believe it is bad language. I know what naval men are.

On the first day of our arrival at Bembridge we did not enter the harbour, but anchored in the roadstead outside, off a beach bearing the curious name of "under tyne." The meaning of this strange expression I failed to discover. It is evidently a fragment of some extinct tongue formerly spoken on the island, probably Jutish.

The reason we did not go inside was because the Tyrant, with what I then thought excessive caution, was afraid to undertake the difficult navigation of the entrance channel without a pilot. I offered to take the vessel in myself, but was induced to abandon my purpose. I did not mind the Poet and the Bookmaker placing themselves on each side of me in bullying attitudes; but when the Crew began ostentatiously taking off his shoes, and the Victim, who could not swim, burst into tears, and commenced saying his prayers out loud, my humane feelings overcame me, and I desisted.

The pilot was away that day attending the funeral of some poor shipwrecked seamen, the crew of a vessel which he had brought half-way into the harbour a few days before. This sad event was quite sufficient to account for the gloom in which we found the place plunged on our advent, and the spiteful remarks that have been made on the subject in the yachting Press only dishonour the writers. The authorities of the Sailing Club lowered their flag to half-mast, and began firing a muffled salute at the moment that the Folly cast anchor in front of the clubhouse on the next day; but I prefer to

take a generous view, and to think that no offence was meant.

By this time we had begun rather to weary of our tinned meals on board the yacht, though we had made no sensible impression as yet on the mass of stores foisted on us by that plausible Yacht Provision scoundrel at Southampton. No sooner did we find ourselves anchored within sight of a Christian hotel, and within

another important and gratifying result; I refer to the discovery of the Magnate.

The Magnate—whose look and bearing so clearly proclaimed him to be one of the great ones of the earth, that the title rose spontaneously to our lips on first beholding him—appeared to be staying at the hotel with his family; and by a stroke of good fortune, of which we felt ourselves almost unworthy, they occupied the next



sound of the dinner-going bell, than my companions began to hanker after the fleshpots of civilisation, and to suggest that we should take our meals ashore. For a time I held out against this suggestion, which I considered unseamanlike; but in the end, rather than run the risk of desertion, I gave way. Possibly this had something to do with our remarkable exemption from those complaints which attack seafaring men on long-protracted voyages. It had also

table to ours. The Magnate was portly and purple, and bearded and bald, and he habitually wore a new dinner-jacket with a rolled silk collar, before whose glories even my swagger yachting suit became of no account, while the Bookmaker looked a cad. On the first night the Poet, imagining he was in a mere out-of-the-way village, committed the fearful gaucherie of coming to dine in flannels, but after once seeing the Magnate he never repeated his indiscretion. The

Magnate's wife, a majestic whose marble loveliness made a powerful impression on the Poet's susceptible nature, usually dined in a low-necked dress with diamonds. She had a daughter, a charming child of about seventeen summers, in whom I felt quite a fatherly interest; and there was also a fragile youth, of studious aspect, but with a power of food-consumption which would have commanded respect among a school of sharks. To watch his progress through a long dinner was far more exciting than any yacht race; and the Bookmaker sometimes so far forgot himself as to bet freely on the chances of his accepting a third instalment of pudding.

The presence of these classy strangers threw quite a glamour over the table d'hôte, besides imposing a grateful check on the vulgar mirth of the Bookmaker. To conceal his real envy of the Magnate's social superiority, he affected an exaggerated awe of him, and called our attention, in hollow whispers, to his lightest act. It was the Magnate's custom to drink port with his dinner, and the first time the head-waiter glided up to his elbow with the bottle, the Bookmaker became wildly excited.

"Look!" he exclaimed beneath his breath. "The Magnate's having his wine out of a basket!"

Such was indeed the case. We watched with strained attention as the venerable head-waiter, holding the basket by its handles, slowly tilted it to the requisite angle, and filled the Magnate's glass. The Magnate lifted it to the light, shut one eye, and scrutinised the contents as if in search of microbes. Then he put the glass to his lips, took a solemn sip, and replaced it on the table. The next moment he looked round, and we bent hastily over our plates, rattling our knives and forks with feverish energy.

Our evident respect and admiration so far won upon the Magnate that after a few days he condescended to nod slightly to us on taking his seat; and I believe that in time we might have won his friendship but for the humiliating episode of the old man from Ryde.

One evening, on coming to take possession of our usual table, we found the fourth seat already occupied by an elderly man of humble and repulsive appearance, who presumed to greet us with an affable smile as we approached. We sat down in silent indignation, which was increased when we saw the Magnate walk in at the head of his family, glance in our direction preparatory to bowing as usual, and stop as if paralysed, with his eyes fixed in a stony glare on the intruder. To complete our mortification, the stranger seized this moment to address us in the tone of one who had known us for years.

"I came from Ryde to-day," he said, in a needlessly loud voice. "I walked all the way." Then, as no one responded, he went on, "Do you find this a dear hotel?"

This to us—to three members of an Inn of Court, to whom money was consequently no object—and with the Magnate and his family greedily drinking in every word!

"We are not staying here, sir," I returned, in my most acid tones.

The old man from Ryde put up his hand to his ear.

"Eh? What?" he bawled.

This was a fresh horror. The intruder was not merely conversationally disposed, but deaf as well. I gnashed my teeth, and repeated my remark in a tone which I tried to make distinct without drowning the conversation at the other tables in the room.

"I can't hear you," screamed the old man from Ryde. "I have a cold in the ear. But I'll take out my wad." And before I realised what he was about to do, he pulled a huge plug of cotton-wool out of one ear and carefully stowed it in his pocket. I stole one shuddering glance at the Magnate. He was green.

"Did you say the hotel was dear?" repeated the old man from Ryde, louder than ever.

I felt that I must quiet him at any cost.

"No!" I shouted in a voice that caused the whole room to turn in our direction with looks of surprise and contempt. "We're not staying in the hotel."

"You're quite right," the old man returned heartily. "You're like me. I

find it cheaper to get a bedroom in a cottage too."

And our expensive and sumptuous yawl, with her owner's berth and her ladies' cabin, lying proudly at anchor within a stone's-throw of the hotel door! I could have wept. The Magnate deliberately and ostentatiously moved his chair round several inches, so as to present his back to us. The Poet scowled,

The dear old gentleman from Ryde.

and kicked me under the table, as if it were my fault. I tried to appear absorbed in my food, but the old man from Ryde was not to be so easily shaken off.

"The railway is very dear too," he remarked confidently, evidently under the impression that he had come upon congenial friends. "That's why I walk. I carry all my luggage in this bag." He dived below the table, and held up an object resembling the hand-satchels in use by ladies, but very battered and greasy. "It

just holds a night-gown, and a comb, and tooth-brush, and a pair of socks," he explained cheerfully. "I find that quite enough."

All this in a voice which could be heard easily by every person in the room. There was murder in the Poet's eye. Even the good-tempered Bookmaker leant across to me and whispered:

"Shut him up, can't you, you idiot!"

"How can I shut him up?" I retorted.

"You shouldn't have begun talking to him, then. You're making an exhibition of us."

At this moment the headwaiter came to take the intruder's order for wine.

"I want a small bottle of lemonade," was the startling response.

The headwaiter blushed and retreated, sending the lemonade presently by a page. Thereupon the old man dived for his bag

again, opened it, and produced a spiritflask, which he calmly emptied into the lemonade. Seeing our eyes glued upon him, he observed with his beastly, irritating we're-all-friends-together air—

"I always bring my own gin. They charge you sixpence for a small glass in these hotels."

The Bookmaker lay back and gasped like a fish.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" he exclaimed, in a choking voice. "I've seen a good many queer drinks in my time, but gin and lemonade—Oh lor!"

I buried my nose in my plate, determined not to give the Thing opposite another chance of addressing me. Presently I heard a gurgle in the Poet's throat as of a man slowly strangling to death, and incautiously looked up. The old man from Ryde had succeeded in impaling a row of green peas on the edge of his knife, and the sharp blade was just disappearing down his gullet.

While his life appeared to be hanging by a hair he caught my eye, and hurled another question at me.

"Is there a Wesleyan chapel in the village?"

The Thing was a Weslevan. Ι turned to the other table, and beheld the Magnate's back heave suppressed indignation, while an icy shiver rippled over the jewelled bosom of his dame. resolutely closed my lips, and made as if I had not heard.



The Poet and the Mermaid.

This policy might have saved me at an earlier stage, but now it was too late. By this time the old man from Ryde had learned to love me, and where there is perfect love there is perfect faith. He simply repeated his question in a louder voice.

"I don't know," I snarled between my teeth. "I know nothing about Wesleyan chapels."

I should have done better to speak distinctly. The old man misunderstood my words.

"Did you say you were a Wesleyan?" he exclaimed, his face beaming with joy.

I a Wesleyan! I sank back into my chair, the big beads of perspiration rolling

down my brow, while the Magnate gave one glance round and then averted his head like one who has looked upon an unclean thing. The Poet gnashed his teeth hard, and I caught a snigger from the Bookmaker. This was too much, and I turned on him.

"No!" I yelled at my tormentor. "Don't ask me. Ask this gentleman." I pointed to the grinning Bookmaker. "He is a Primitive Methodist."

The Bookmaker started as if he had been shot, and the snigger died in his throat. Before he could frame a protest, the Magnate set back his chair with a clang, and, rising in awful majesty, marshalled his family out of the room. The

effect on the old man from Ryde was little less start-He gazed ling. helplessly at the Bookmaker, taking in the various peculiarities his appearance, and evidently struggling with the most painful doubts. Then slowly rising from

his seat, he once more opened his bag and fished out three tracts, which he solemnly handed round, and walked away in mournful silence.

My tract was headed, The Seat of the Scornful; the Bookmaker's was, A Word to Drunkards; the Poet's was, There is Room for All.

We felt that the old man from Ryde had had the best of it.

By this time the Poet had already made his famous discovery of the Mermaid, the discovery which has been received with so much bitterness by rival morphologists, some of whom have not scrupled to challenge the discovery and to write against the existence of mermaids. In an enlightened age like ours, when every day brings to light some fresh marvel of science, such bigotry is pitiable to a degree; but it is not the worst. Between earnest and faithful students of the secrets of nature there ought to be a bon camaraderie and an esprit de corps which would render impossible such charges as have soiled the pages of organs like the Lancet and the Zoologiker Zeitung in connection with this discovery. When it is hinted that men like the Poet, the Bookmaker, and myself are capable of bad faith, the limits of permissible morphological criticism are surely overpassed.

The Mermaid was discovered in her coral cave, where she dwelt, surrounded by casks and flagons inscribed in many tongues, no doubt the spoil of wrecks in the dangerous harbour. In them she kept magical potions, with which, like Circe of old, she beguiled the stranded mariner, and took away his reason. Poet fell an easy victim to her wiles, and spent hours sitting in the mouth of her cave, watching the Mermaid combing out her golden locks and doing the other things that mermaids do; while soft, low strains floated from an automatic barrelorgan at the back of the cave, into whose slot the wretched man's infatuation led him to drop an endless succession of pennies as an excuse for lingering in the perilous neighbourhood. It was supposed that the Mermaid received a commission on the sums earned by the barrel-organ, and in these days even mermaids have to look after the main chance.

While the Poet was thus engaged the Bookmaker set himself to outrage propriety and create a scandal in the village by planting himself at the open window of a smoking-room overlooking the main thoroughfare, where he sat with his feet on the window-sill, smoking strong cigars and drinking whiskeys and sodas all day long, in full view of the passers-by, while he read a disreputable gaudy-pink sporting journal. The empty tumblers were care-

fully ranged in a row on the ledge outside. When tired of reading the pink newspaper he amused himself by luring innocent children, on their way down to play on the beach, with cake and lemonade, which he passed out to them through the window, to the grief and mortification of their respectable parents.

It is sometimes said that children are good judges of character. This is a gross delusion. There are no worse judges of I have found character than children. that to be so. The Bookmaker I know to be a bad man. I have known him for years, and he is worse now than when I knew him first. He has every vice which a man can have, and be a man—from golf to murder. He collects vices. It is his foible. If the Bookmaker hears of any new vice, any vice that he hasn't got already, he will go round and hunt up that vice, and spend any money in acquiring it. And if there is any vice outside his powers, so to speak, he will pretend to have it. He is not above obtaining a vice by fraud if he can't get it honestly. I have known him stoop to fake a vice. And yet the Bookmaker is popular with children. No child has ever had the sense to see through a walking monument of crime like that. When children see the Bookmaker they run after him as though he were a band or a monkey. The Bookmaker does not really care for children. He calls them rough names, and brushes them away like flies; but it makes no difference. Now, I am always kind to children. When I am in their company I try hard to lower myself to their level. mingle light playfulness with moral precepts calculated to improve their young minds. What is the result? I simply find myself treated with familiarity and disrespect. I have been called a "silly man" by an infant of five, whose doll I was pretending to dally with, in the secret hope of propitiating her father, a solicitor of the Supreme Court. Such words are

actionable, unless proved. It is a hollow world.

I deem it my duty to the public to state plainly the unfortunate circumstances which led to that mutiny, of which so much has been made by the enemies of our expedition. I had long ago come to the conclusion that the Bookmaker's presence reflected no real credit on the undertaking. The disgraceful confusion in his mind between the *Folly* and a race-horse had led to more than one regrettable incident, and had produced a very bad impression on the hands. But I was still unprepared to regard him as a dangerous lunatic till the event I have to record.

It was a glorious morning. was beautifully smooth, and there was a light, ruffling breeze from the direction of Southsea. Our nautical cravings asserted themselves; and as soon as breakfast was over we decided to put out to sea for a short cruise. We laid our project before the Tyrant, who accorded a gracious permission; the Crew was piped on deck, and all hands made sail out of harbour, the Tyrant conning the vessel from the bows, while the Victim steered till the shoals and reefs were safely passed. The Bookmaker, whose turn to command it was, then took the helm; the Poet brought a writing-pad and a fountain pen on deck, and began writing a sonnet to the Mermaid; and I stretched myself at full length by his side, drawing lazily at my curly meerschaum, and watching some tropic birds as they gambolled across the sky or dipped their white, glistening feathers in the blue waves. clothed the meerschaum in a chamoisleather waistcoat, not out of any morbid prudery, but simply to preserve its complexion from the salt air.

I have said it was a glorious morning. I lay there in a state of dreamy languor, soothed by the soft rustle of the wavelets as they clapped their little hands against the sides of the yacht, and by the

scratching of the Poet's pen. It is the Poet's habit to couch his sonnets in very general language, so as to go round as much as possible. When he has one done he makes two or three dozen copies with a different girl's name at the head, and posts them out like circulars to all his female friends. I say this is dishonest, and that a really great poet would be above such tactics; but the Poet says it is business, because when he brings out a new book of poems he puts the sonnet in headed "To-," and every one of those women thinks she is the "and buys several copies (on which the Poet receives a royalty of 4d. each). He says if Shakespeare and Milton and those men were alive now they would do just the same.

After a pleasant trip round the Fitzwilliam buoy we made up our minds to return. The breeze had begun to freshen, and there was a little popple on the water which we liked, but which reminded us of our other engagements.

The Folly was put about, and we ran back before the wind. I was still lying on my back and taking no notice of where the boat was going when all at once I heard a cry of terror from the forecastle. I started up and looked round. At once I understood the cause of the alarm. We were heading direct for the low stone breakwater which protects the mouth of the harbour, and approaching it with fearful speed.

Uttering a cry myself I turned towards the Bookmaker, expecting to find he had fallen asleep at his post. To my astonishment he was sitting bolt upright on a deck chair, grasping the tiller in both hands, with his teeth closely set, and a tense, rigid look in his eyes, which were fixed on the obstacle in front.

"Look out, man! What are you doing? Do you want to wreck us?" I shouted.

"Keep cool," he responded in low, hissing accents, without taking his eyes

off the breakwater for a moment. "."
am putting her at it."

"Great Jerusalem! Are you mad enough to think of trying to make the yawl jump that breakwater?"

He nodded, keeping his eyes fixed in the same set stare, as the *Folly* tore swiftly through the waves. "She ought not to refuse it. It is low enough for her to take it in her stride."

We were within a dozen yards of certain shipwreck as he spoke. I had given up all for lost when the Crew, in an outburst of mad panic, forgetting the restraints of discipline which should be binding on British seamen even in moments of the greatest danger, rushed aft with wild oaths. wrenched the tiller out of the Bookmaker's hands, and sent the Folly sharply round. It was just in time. Our bumpkin scraped the

stones of the breakwater as we came about.

There is no doubt that technically this amounted to mutiny on the high seas, and, I believe, we should have been within our legal rights if we had hanged the Crew at the yard-arm. We refrained from doing so for two reasons, first, because yawls have no yard-arm, and, secondly, because the Poet and I felt that the Bookmaker's conduct placed him outside the pale of

ordinary naval etiquette. He afterwards pretended it was a joke. For such jokes men are being assassinated in Chicago every minute.

While condemning the Crew on the one hand for his insubordination, on the other hand we felt that he was entitled to some reward for saving our lives. The Poet and I therefore made up a purse of five shillings, which we presented to him

with an illuminated address. The medal of the Royal Hu mane Society was also applied for, but withheld out of what I cannot but regard as an ungenerous quibble, the secretary stating in his letter that in bestowing their medals, Society regarded not merely the risk run but also the value of the lives saved.

I find the next entry in my Log relates to the climate of the newly-discovered island. Per-

The natives gaze at our yawl.

sonally, I felt no ill effects from it so far, but I now began to observe that it was telling seriously on the health of the ship's hands, coming as they did from the more bracing air of Southampton. The Tyrant's hair, which was jet black when we started on our voyage, was becoming streaked with grey; the Crew had grown painfully nervous, and seemed ready to start at a shadow; and even the Victim, who had come aboard in all the

happy carelessness of youth, began to droop and pine, and went about with a subdued air pitiful to see in one so young. It is likely there was malaria about, though we hadn't noticed it. All these foreign resorts have their dangers, which it is unwise to brave without taking proper precautions. The Bookmaker said the finest preventive to malaria was Scotch whiskey. If so, he was certainly cautious to a fault. The malaria microbe which attempted to tackle him would simply have been committing suicide. The Bookmaker must have been fatal to all the microbes within a radius of many yards. Wherever he went he must have blighted whole colonies of microbes like an Upas tree. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ought to have interfered.

Against my better judgment I now insert a short specimen of the kind of thing which the Bookmaker was not ashamed to write in the Log, and in which he appears to see nothing unusual or shocking. I print it with apologies to any respectable person into whose hands this work may accidentally fall. I have said before that I am not proud of my own Log, that I regard it, not as a swagger, classy Log, but as an ordinary, practical, business Log. But before I would have written a Log like this I would have scuttled the yacht:—

"Bembridge. This morning after a light feed we hoisted our number, harnessed Folly in her stall, and then cast off the halter and walked her out of the stable. Coming out into the open we gave her her head, and cantered her off in a light breeze. I took the reins for the first hour and found her easy under a snaffle, but inclined to pull away on the off side. Headed her for the Bembridge Ledge flag, which she passed at a stiff trot, then turned and, giving her a touch of the topsail, brought her back at a gallop to see the racing.

"Details: -Commodore's Cup Stakes,

for eighteen-year-olds. There were seven entries for this race, but only five came to the post, Dot, Kismet (the favourite), Wee Win, Jeanie, and Viva. At 12.0 noon the flag was dropped from the weighing boat and a good field got away, the start being effected on fairly level terms. Kismet made the running, with Dot close The rest of the field soon behind. tailed off, but the two already named ran it out to a close finish. Kismet left the Fitzwilliam flag on the near side, which caused a protest from the other jockey. Coming into the straight Wee Win made a gallant effort to creep up to the other two, but the mare's stride was too short to enable her to catch them. Nearing home Dot's rider was seen to be using the sheet freely, and amid breathless excitement his mount drew clear just at the post, winning a close race by a bowsprit.

"Starting Prices. Kusmet 5 to 4 on, Dot 2 to 1 agst., Wee Win 3 to 1, Jeanie 9 to 2, Viva 12 to 1, all offered. No takers, except for drinks."

VI.

AN INLAND VOYAGE—A SPECIAL TRAIN—
BRADING—THE PLEASURE VISITOR'S COMPANION—LITTLE JANE'S GRAVE—ALLEGED
ROMAN VILLA—NEWPORT—INTERVIEW
WITH THE MAYOR.

Finding that my companions were becoming enervated by the delights of Bembridge, like Hannibal's soldiers in Capua, I called them together on the quarter-deck of the Folly, and made them a stirring harangue.

"What are we here for?" I began.

"Did we come to the Isle of Wight to loaf around in hotels, drinking and guzzling, and flirting with the native women? No. We are explorers, or we are nothing. Let us prove ourselves worthy of that proud title; let us explore. Away in the interior of the country, concealed among yon grass-clad mountains, there is said to lie a dim rich city called Newport, the

metropolis of the whole isle, and the home of a mighty Corporation. Were we to return to the Temple without penetrating to that fabled region and interviewing its Mayor we should be justly despised, and our claims to rank as the Pizarros of the nineteenth century would fall to the ground."

These manly words made some impression on them, but not much. Instead of at once calling on me to lead them inland, they timorously hung back, raising objections which were unworthy of brave men. The Poet asked whether the aborigines in the interior were likely to prove friendly, and whether it was necessary to carry a stock of glass beads to trade with them. The Bookmaker wanted to know whether there was any chance of meeting lions or elephants, and, if so, whether it was lawful to shoot them without having a game licence. I mention these things simply as specimens of what I had to encounter at every stage of the expedition. However, I managed to persuade them at last, and we made our preparations for the journey.

The town of Newport, I may state here, lies about eight miles from Bembridge as the crow flies, or, in fact, as the magpie or the seagull or the humming-bird or any of those birds flies. I am not aware that the crow flies any straighter than any other well-conducted bird. I think it likely the crow has got a false reputation over this business. I have known crows who flew far from straight. I have seen crows fly round and round and up and down, and stop to lunch on the way, and behave exactly like railway trains. It is my opinion, based on scientific observation, that the crow is a humbug, and flies worse than a cracker. If I couldn't fly any straighter than a crow I would swim.

By the Isle of Wight railway system Newport is about sixteen miles from Bembridge. There are two changes on the way, at Brading and Sandown, and the journey occupies from two to three hours, according to the weather and the state of the engine-driver's health. But as we were in no hurry we decided to go by train, and I went on in advance to secure tickets, leaving the others to follow with the luggage.

When I came out of the ticket office I found the Bookmaker and Poet on the platform waiting for me with anxious looks. The moment I appeared they rushed up exclaiming—

"Have you taken the tickets?"

"Why no, I haven't done that exactly," I returned, with a subtle smile which they did not understand.

"Thank heaven!" burst from the Poet's pallid lips, while the Bookmaker silently crossed himself. "Look here," the Poet went on, "we shall have to walk after all. We have just learnt that the railways on this island are the dearest in the world. To begin with, there is no third class, only second and first. And the tariff is simply ruinous; even stockbrokers complain of it. It would be cheaper for us to have down a four-wheeler from London, and drive over."

"Indeed!" I observed with great sang-froid. "Well, I am afraid it is too late to think of that now, because I have just chartered a special train."

"A special—Mercy on us!" The Poet could say no more. His knees gave way under him, and with a low, muffled wail he dropped on his portmanteau and buried his face in his hands.

The Bookmaker made one bound forward and seized me by the shoulders, shaking me till my bones rattled in my skin.

"You scoundrel! You miserable, presumptuous lunatic! So you have gone and ruined us, have you; bankrupted us, robbed us of our hard-earned gains and reduced us to beggary, to gratify your strutting, empty-headed vanity? A special train! So you thought you would put on side, did you; wanted to rival the Magnate, I suppose, eh? Thought you would pass yourself off on this blessed village—where there isn't even a pawnshop where we can raise the price of a drink on your gun-metal Waterbury—for a blooming toff, ha? Wretched youth!"

When the excitement had simmered down a little I explained.

"The special is only to take us from here to Brading, where we change on to the main line. There is only one train on the railway between here and Brading, and it runs to and fro about four times a day. If you want to catch a train at Brading in between whiles, you have to get them to run it as a special. The price for the special train is fifteen shillings, or five shillings if you belong to the golf club."

The Bookmaker gave me a dark, furtive look.

"If you had used a little diplomacy, old man, you might have got us that train for five bob," he remarked in a husky whisper.

"I did use a little diplomacy. I said we belonged to the golf club."

After that they apologised handsomely, and we went on board the train with light hearts.

Our departure made a great sensation in the village. I believe it was the first time anyone had ever made the attempt to go to Newport by train, and many of the older inhabitants seemed to be sceptical about our success. We were taking clothes and provisions for a week, so as to be prepared for emergencies. The Magnate and his family turned up at the station to see us off, and so did the committee of the Sailing Club. I thought the way they discussed the chances of our ever returning was rather callous. It made me fear that admiration for our daring exploit was swallowed up in some less worthy feeling.

The rolling stock of the Bembridge Railway consists of three carriages and an engine. They placed the whole lot at

our disposal. It is their reckless, lavish custom to do so. They crowd their entire rolling stock into every train they run. They have no prudence, no forethought. They do not look ahead to a time when maybe one of their carriages will want repainting, or a wheel will come off; and they will have no reserve stock to fall back upon. It made us feel like royal personages to have a whole railway carriage apiece, and we only regretted we hadn't brought the cabin-boy with us as a suite. Two of these carriages are constructed on the tramcar principle with little platforms at each end, on which you can stand out and enjoy the scenery. It is contrary to the bye-laws to do this, and we had to promise the guard before the train started that we wouldn't; but we This was distinctly wrong; but the object of this narrative is not to glaze over and palliate sin, but to draw moral lessons from it for the instruction of the young of both sexes. The Poet caught a cold, the Bookmaker got a smut in his eye which it took hours to remove, and I had a nervous shock every time the train bumped over the natural obstacles along the line.

We swept into Brading just as the train we wanted to catch wandered out at the other end of the station. As we had more than an hour to wait for the next, the Poet insisted that we should put in the time exploring Brading. By right I was commander for the day, but when on shore we usually waived our rank, and I yielded to the Poet's clamour.

The Poet had succeeded in procuring out of the penny box of a second-hand bookshop in Holywell Street a battered copy of a work entitled The Pleasure Visitor's Companion to the Isle of Wight. We were not pleasure visitors—far from it—and therefore I hold that in strictness we had no right to avail ourselves of this manual. But the Poet clung to it, and carried it about with him everywhere, and reposed a blind faith in its dicta which

exasperated the Bookmaker and me beyond endurance. The Pleasure Visitor's Companion claimed to be the work of a person styling himself "George Brannon, Artist," and to be published in the island. Apart from its merits as a guide, it contained a mine of beautiful poetical description, penetrated here and there by a vein of quiet sarcasm which made me wish I could have met George Brannon, Artist, in the flesh.

Brading, the Poet took it on himself to explain to us, derives it chief title to fame from being the burial-place of LITTLE JANE. Little Jane, it would appear, was a young person of the female sex who inhabited a cottage in the earlier part of the century, from which circumstance she acquired the designation of The Young Cottager. She is immortalised under that name by the Reverend Leigh Richmond, the sainted author of Annals of the Poor, to whom she endeared herself by her youthful piety. The Poet told us that Leigh Richmond was the friend and spiritual adviser of his venerable grandmother, who had induced the Poet to read the Annals when young, and had frequently said to him: "Ah, Marmaduke, be a Little Jane!" As Little Jane chiefly distinguished herself by her edifying but premature end, hastened no doubt by the defective drainage of her cottage, this advice was rather disheartenng to a healthy boy. It was thrown away on the Poet; he is not in the least like Little Jane. However, amidst the degrading influences of a legal career, he has preserved an ennobling reverence for her mentory, and he insisted on our coming round with him to see her grave. I went against my inclination. I am not a gravist by habit. I do not care for graves. have no grave myself, and have never felt the want of it. Those who go in for graves may swagger about them if they like; they will not succeed in making me jealous. I despise luxuries.

Arrived at the churchyard, with the aid of the *Pleasure Visitor's Companion* we

discovered the grave. The Poet bared his head, and became eloquent.

"Here," he said impressively, "rest the mortal remains of Little Jane! She was a good girl. Think of it, ye kings and great ones of the earth! Blush, if ye can, for your fleeting pomp, your hollow joys and triumphs! Come hither, ye Magnates, ye Actor-managers, ye Benchers; stand beside this simple turf, and drop a tear upon the tomb of Little Jane!"

The Actor-managers and Benchers didn't come, but I could see the Poet was deeply moved. The Bookmaker, who had struck up a reverential attitude beside the grave, and tried hard to seem impressed, ventured to question him in a hoarse whisper.

"Yes, old man, I sympathise with your feelings; but what did Little Jane do?"

The Poet choked down a sob, and glanced at him with pained reproach.

- "What do you mean?" he demanded.
 "Do?"
 - "Yes, what did she do, anyway?"
 - "She died."
- "Anything else? It seems to me anybody could do that."
- " Her pure young spirit went to heaven, of course."
 - "Ah! How do you prove that?"
 - "It says so in the book"
- "What book? The Pleasure Visitor's Companion?"
 - "No, no; in the Annals of the-"
- "All right! And is that all? Didn't she do anything besides die?"
- "No, of course not. She couldn't, you know!"

The Bookmaker coughed, and drew out his watch impatiently.

"Look here, you Johnnies," he said, reverting to his ordinary tone, "this is infernally slow. I vote we adjourn. We have got a quarter of an hour before the train, and I saw a pub. as we came along."

We adjourned.

The scene worked so powerfully on the

Poet's sensitive mind that he composed a poem on the subject the next day, which, acting on his legal rights, he insisted on inserting in the Log. He complains that it has been unanimously declined by the evangelical press; and I am not surprised.

THE BALLAD OF LITTLE JANE.

BY THE POET.

A Christian child was Little Jane; She never caused her parents pain. She lived within a cottage small, For they could not afford a hall. Upon the blessed Sabbath day Twice did she go to church alway. She went there in the morning soon, And also in the afternoon.

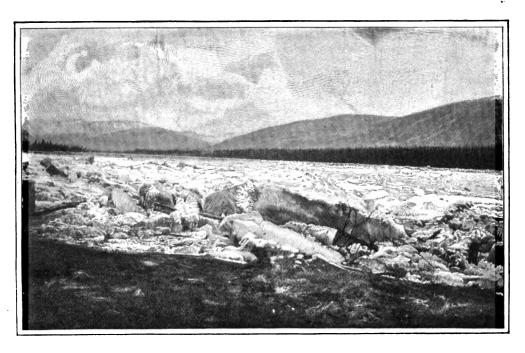
Her hair was brushed, her frock was dapper Her mother never had to slap her. She was her parents' only daughter, And washed her face with soap and water.

Now she is dead and gone below*
To taste the joys good children know.
Reader, if you such joys would gain,
Go thou and be a Little Jane!

* The Poet says this should be above, but being poetry the geography had to be sacrificed to the rhyme. Surely this is straining poetic licence?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]





Ice breaking up on the Yukon in the Spring.

HO, FOR THE KLONDIKE!*

BY HAMLIN GARLAND.

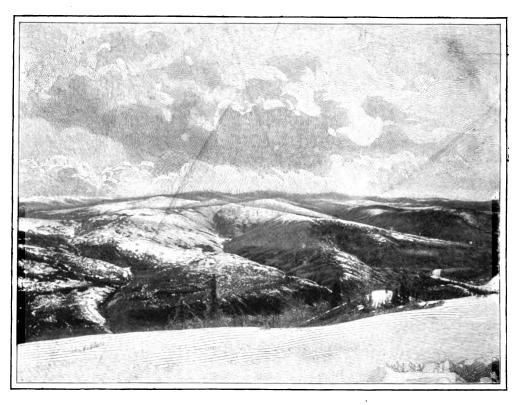
IN TWO PARTS.-PART I.

THE word "Klondike" is now universally taken to mean the gold country of the whole mighty region of the British North-West Territory which lies between the Continental Divide on the east and the Coast Range on the west. Broadly speaking, this region is 300 miles wide and 600 miles long. It reaches from Teslin Lake to Circle City, which lies within the Arctic Zone. The scale of measurement is enormous. The Yukon itself, in midsummer,

is actually navigable for boats more than 2,300 miles. In general the region may be described as a wide, hilly valley, meshed with converging streams, deep sunk in the rocks.

It is a grim country, a country of extremes; it has a long and sunless winter and a short, hot, moist summer. In winter the sun hardly makes itself felt, rising pale and white only for a few hours above the horizon. In summer it shines all day,

* Editor's Note.—This article embodies the latest and most authentic general information regarding the Klondike region and the roads leading into it. Mr. Garland went directly to the Hon. Clifford Sifton, Canadian Minister of the Interior, through whose courtesy interviews were held with the specially detailed engineers just returned from surveying the various routes. These official surveyors went carefully over the whole subject with Mr. Garland, putting him in possession of just the facts which his purpose required. Much of the matter of the article is given, indeed, in their own words. It embodies also matter from valuable official reports, some of which are not yet published. We are not permitted to name all the men who thus served Mr. Garland, but among them were Mr. William Ogilvie and Mr. J. J. McArthur, civil engineers in the service of the Dominion Government; and Dr. George M. Dawson, head of the Dominion Geological Department. Through the kindness of Captain Deville, Dominion Surveyor-General, we are enabled also to reproduce kitherto unspublished photographs of scenes along the several routes taken by the Dominion topographical surveyors, Mr. W. Ogilvie and Mr. Jennings.



A view from the mountain top east of Dawson City, looking north-west across Yukon Valley.

(Photograph bv W. Ogilvie.)

and part of the night. In July, when rain is not falling, the air is close and hot, the thermometer often registering 100 in the shade. Moss covers the high ground like a wet thick sponge throughout vast areas, and the soil is, in effect, perpetually There is little vegetable mould, and plant life is sparse. Steam arises under the hot sun from the cold, rainsoaked moss, and the nights are foggy and damp even in June and July. Gnats and mosquitoes move to and fro in dense clouds during midsummer, and add to the many discomforts and discouragements of the region. Life is a warfare. Fuel is scarce. There is little game, and not There never were many Inmany fish. dians in the district—the valley is too inhospitable for life of any kind to greatly Agriculture is practically imabound. possible. It is likely to freeze any night of the year. The climate, in short, is subarctic in character, and in and about Dawson City nearly all the features of the Arctic Zone are realised. The ice does not go out of the river, even at Dawson, till late in May or June, and the river closes early in September.

EDMONTON AND PEACE RIVER ROUTE.

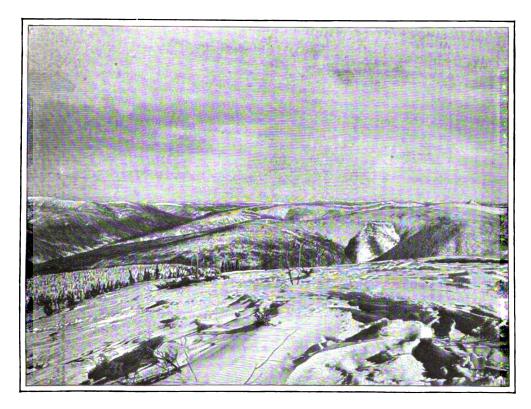
Having decided that he wishes to take the risk involved in entering this grim country, the miner must decide on his route. The routes may be divided into two groups; the overland and the seaport. Of the overland, there are at present three: the Edmonton and Peace River route, "the old telegraph trail," and the Kamloops inland route. The Edmonton route begins at Edmonton, a small town at the end of a northern spur of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and proceeds by

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way of Little Slave Lake to Peace River, thence across the divide into the valley of the Stikine River to Telegraph Creek and Teslin Lake, which is the head waters of the Yukon. This route is a very long one, and little information is obtainable concerning it. It is undoubtedly practicable, and will be largely travelled by those not in breathless haste to get to Dawson City. It offers abundant fields for prospecting, and is a pleasant summer route. It will take about sixty days to go from Edmonton to Teslin Lake. The citizens of Edmonton are using all means to make this route easy and safe. It cannot be safely used before the middle of Pack horses are plentiful, and feed is good from May 15th to Novem-

THE OLD TELEGRAPH TRAIL.

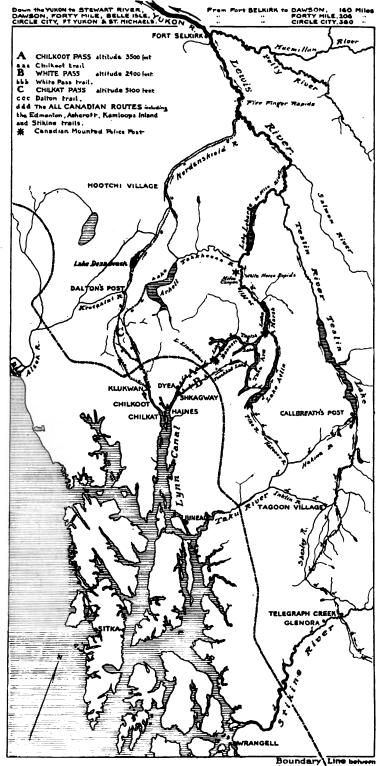
The second overland route, the "old telegraph trail," begins at Ashcroft, a small village on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and follows the Fraser River over an excellent stage road constructed by the Canadian Government to the little town of Quesnelle, 223 miles north. Good stopping-places abound along the Here the road ends, and the trail turns to the west, and, passing over a nearly level country with good grass, reaches Fort Fraser on Fraser Lake, 125 miles from Quesnelle. Fraser is a Hudson Bay post and tradingstore, with two white men and several families of Indians, quite well civilised, settled near. A limited amount of sup plies will be obtainable here. Up to this



View on Eldorado Creek, looking south.

(Photograph by W. Ogilvie.)

Eldorado Creek is a branch of the Klondike. It flows through the ravine shown on the left in the picture. The ravine in the foreground is the head of Franch Creek.



THE ROUTES TO THE KLONDYKE.

Boundary Line between ALASKA and CANADA which pollows the summit on the High Coast Range.

point the trail is quite level, and though there are hundreds of creeks, none are deep or hard to pass. The three rivers, the Blackwater, the Mud, and the Nechaco, can be forded except in high water, when rafts will have to be used and poled or paddled across. Neither of them is very wide. Many trails cross the route, and it will be necessary to have a native guide, unless some means should be taken to mark the main trail. "In this 125 miles there are over 300 good hay swamps and many Indian villages where feed for the horses can be found in abundance. Indeed, the longest drive without good feed for the horses will not exceed fifteen miles."

Beyond Fort Fraser the next supply point is Stuart, a Hudson Bay post with three or four whites and eighty or one hundred Indians, who live in cabins and make their living by hunting, fishing, and trapping. From Fort Fraser to Hazleton is probably 325 miles. The trip from Ouesnelle to Hazleton can be made by pack animals, and will require from sixteen to twenty days. Hazleton has a small population of prospectors who winter in the neighbourhood. A Hudson Bay post, a few cabins, and a couple of stores are all that are to be found here, although about 15,000 Indians trade at this point. The goods are brought up by a Hudson Bay boat on the Skeena River during high water.

"From here it is about 200 miles to Telegraph Creek. The trail has been used for thirty-five years, and the Government has spent hundreds of pounds to keep it in first-class condition. It will take from seven to ten days to travel this distance, as it is a little harder than before reaching Hazleton. There are two large stores at Telegraph Creek, and they do a great business." From Telegraph Creek to Teslin Lake the trail will be the "Stikine route," now being opened by the

Canadian Government. It is estimated to be 150 miles long, and can be traversed in ten days or less. At Lake Teslin the trail ends and the waterway begins.

The Ashcroft trail is alluring. climate is genial and the land full of There are frequent stoppingplaces, and the Indians are friendly and The advantages of this route are offset, however, by obvious disadvantages. It is very long. According to the estimate of Senator Reid it will take fifty days (forty days from Quesnelle), though by going in light it could be traversed in ten days less time, provided there were no delays for bridge building. It would be possible to go in light, sending the bulk of the outfit by way of Victoria to Telegraph Creek. Part of the outfit could be replenished at Hazleton. would not be safe to leave Quesnelle till the grass came, say by the 10th of May. After that time the telegraph trail would be a comparatively cheap and pleasant route, with no duties and no toll to pay. It is reasonably safe to count on the early building of bridges and ferries.

In the matter of outfitting, it is probable that Kamloops, Ashcroft, and Quesnelle could furnish complete outfits for a limited number of pack trains, and being upon the Canadian Pacific road, supplies could be hurried forward by telegraph from Victoria, Vancouver, or Winnipeg. The only American outfitting point of any considerable size for this route is Spokane. To outfit in Spokane under present rules would make the outfit dutiable at the line. Ashcrost is a village; Kamloops is a town of nearly 2,000 inhabitants; Ouesnelle has about 500 inhabitants. It would be possible also to outfit at Calgary or Winnipeg or even at St. Paul or Minneapolis, shipping the goods direct to Ashcroft, Edmonton, Hazleton, or Glenora, according to whichever route the prospector elected to take.



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IN SHAKESPEARE'S WORLD.

BY EVELYN WEBSTER.

WITH A DRAWING BY T. H. ROBINSON.

I.—Dogberry.



IFTS, that
God gives,"
said he, and
conscious
humility
could go no
further. At
a crisis in
history—his
town's his-

tory—the Governor himself had praised those gifts, had lamented that old Verges, the colleague in office, came short of them. Yet Dogberry gives the praise where praise is due.

"Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo," said the Psalmist. "Remember thou art mortal," whispered the slave in the conquering general's ear at a Roman triumph. "Ah, my friends, let me not forget that I am but a man," cried the Mayor of Paisley when they drank his health. Of such temper was Dogberry lso.

Gifts require occasion, for their recognition at all events. And happy it was for Dogberry that occasion came, worthy of his gifts. Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon, was returning from the wars with all his train, and Messina welcomed him in her gayest mood. With dear ladies and lovely knights the whole town glittered and whispered and laughed. For a whole week long, like Beatrice's heart, all had kept on the windy side of care. And now with to-morrow's marriage of the Governor's own daughter the climax was at hand, and into Dogberry's charge was given the watch over all these light and happy souls the

while they slept. Magnifying his office, he rose to his own importance. It might be indeed argued that he was expressly appointed to meet the emergency on account of his proved sagacity and well-known learning. His indifference to minor points of procedure would support that view. But I think it was not so: his indifference rose from a comprehensive and self-reliant mind. His appointment to office was no new thing, though on this occasion special functions may have been added. He calls himself the "poor duke's officer"; he is known as a City Officer and Constable Dogberry. knowledge of his duties he is at least on a level with his own watchmen, and they, we are aware, knew what belonged to a watch. They would rather sleep than talk.

"Gifts, that God gives"—gifts of intellect bestowed by Nature's plenteous hand. He is not ashamed on occasion to show a tempered pride in his wits, a humble thankfulness for his acumen.

Dogb. We are now to examination these men. Verg. And we must do it wisely.

Dogb. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that (touching his forehead) shall drive some of them to a non com.

It is thought he means non compos mentis, but he might just as well be thinking of non commissa, or be feeling after nemine contradicente. Who shall unravel the subtleties of that brain? He is himself well aware that his mind is not like other men's. "A marvellous witty fellow," he says, when a prisoner pleads Not Guilty; "but I will go about with him." And when driven by irritation to the

oblivion of modesty, "I am a wise fellow," he exclaims, with the nakedness which is excused to truth in extremity.

He is not an old man, though his years are worthy of suspect. He may appeal to his youth and his age in the same breath. He is at the time of life which may declare itself young or old, and in either case meet with an indulgent smile. To himself he is still "as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina." Verges looks up to him with the deprecating humility of the aged, and in return receives the tolerant compassion due to age from talent in the vigour of its years.

Dogb. (to Leonato). Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest, as the skin between his brows.

Verg. Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I.

Dogb. Comparisons are odorous; palabras, neighbour Verges.

Yes, palabras! Restrain your garrulity, old man, as the Spaniards say. Verges can hardly get in a word. What need, when a certain other is by?

Dogb. (aside to Leonato). A good old man, sir; he will be talking; as they say, When the age is in, the wit is out; God help us! it is a world to see!—(Patting Verges, I think, condescendingly on the back.) Well said, i' faith, neighbour Verges.—(Meditatively, to the audience.) well, God's a good man; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind.—(Aside to Leonato.) An honest soul, i' faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread: but God is to be worshipped: all men are not alike; (Stroking Verges soothingly on the arm.) alas, good neighbour!

It is probable, though not quite certain, that Dogberry could not write or read. Had he been a victim to vulgar education, could he have enriched the language with so varied a discourse or with phrases of such wayward ingenuity? Could he have charged the watch to comprehend all vagrom men? or have asked if the whole dissembly had appeared? or have ordered the prisoners to be opinioned?

Perhaps rightly, he calls reading and writing a vanity, a thing that comes by nature; whereas to be a well-favoured man (such as one he could name) is the gift of for-For the elementary accomplishments of the village school he depends, like the watch, upon one of the scholard family of Seacoal. Two brothers there were, George and Francis, and both could read and write. Nay, Francis was sexton, and acted as constable's clerk beside,—a promising youth, though too much given to correct his betters on points of legal procedure. But that's the way of lawyers' clerks, and much must be forgiven the man on whom so much depends. When Francis leaves the court, Dogberry is at a It is just conceivable that had he been able to write, he would have broken through all rules and customs, and with his own hand have written himself down an ass, instead of appealing to the watch to remember.

It is conceivable, but not certain; for Dogberry has a most potent belief in all rules and customs of the law. He loves to roll out the law's peculiar language. His phrases are not pedantically exact, but they are something like the law; and flesh cannot hope for more. He is one that knows the law himself. He is ready to bet five to one (in shillings) on a point of law against any man that knows the 'statues.' May the watch, representing the prince's own person, stay the prince's own person in the night? It is a metaphysical and complex question, well worthy of the legal brain. Dogberry asserts they may; he is not the man to minish the law's authority. Of course, if the prince be not willing to be stayed, that is quite another matter. For, indeed, the watch ought to offend no

That brings us to a new point. So far, we have merely seen the self-important constable, not indeed that modern terror of the nursemaid's charges, but a man more like an inspector or even an unpaid

magistrate in dignity and tone of mind. Dogberry, to be sure, was not unpaid exactly. Like a policeman "Thankyer, sir," he mutters "God save the foundation!" when Leonato rewards his zeal. But in status and knowledge he does not fall so very far below the country magistrate. He is a householder and a rich fellow enough, go to; and (surest mark of respectability) a fellow that hath had losses; and (which settles the point) one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him. Tradition almost as old as Shakespeare's time says he dwelt at Grendon in Buckinghamshire. It does not matter where he dwelt, for have we not all seen him swelling and ruffling into Court like a three-year turkey-cock advancing towards the village green? Shakespeare loved to draw such men. Perhaps that other tradition that he himself had suffered at their hands had something to do with it. It is the law and its guardians that share with Mistress Quickly that excellent gift of malapropism. The law has embedded itself in a tertiary stratum of language, lest simple laymen should understand its meaning. But we have our revenge. The man of law is an irresistible mark for buffoonery. Lear (who is always right as long as he is mad) puts it down to the contrast between the law's assumed infallibility and the frailty of the poor little mortal who gives it voice.

But in Dogberry there is that one further point, and it raises him from satire to the benign air of comedy. He is anxious to be writ down an ass, but if you should take him for a lion, 'twere pity of his life. Let the watch offend no His charge is that they leave man. knaves alone. They that touch pitch will be defiled. Let the thief steal away, and leave them in peace. Dogberry loves an ancient and most quiet watchman. He loves all mankind, and would harm He has been married and borne his sufferings with a manly patience. He would not hang a dog by his will. have always been called a merciful man, partner," said old Verges, touched at the thought of the human heart which beat beneath that solemn robe of office, and tempered the judgments of that shrewd and active brain. A kindly, middle-aged sort of man, whom even law and officialism could not harden, bluster as he might. We may meet him any day, and when next we are summoned for keeping a muzzle at large without a dog, may we fall into hands as discriminating. Till then God keep his worship; we wish his worship well; God restore him to health; we humbly give him leave to depart.





THE FINDING OF THE HOLY GRAIL. Beardsley's first drawing for reproduction. (The frontispiece to "Le Morte d'Arthur.")

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

BY MAX BEERBOHM.

ILLUSTRATED FROM DRAWINGS THAT ARE LITTLE KNOWN, AND SOME THAT HAVE

NEVER BEFORE BEEN REPRODUCED.*



O all who knew him, and to all who did not know him but are lovers of lineal art, Aubrey Beardsley's death has been the occasion for much sorrow, an irreparable loss. But there is, I think, some consolation in the thought that he did

not die suddenly. Though he died, a great artist, in his first youth, and at the very opening of life, as life is usually reckoned, Fate did not deal with him unfairly, did not take him, as she has taken others, with a kind of brutal treachery, before the fulfilment of all the work that was in him. From his early boyhood, Aubrey Beardsley had known quite well that his life would inevitably he a short one, and it was to this knowledge, partly, that we owe the great range of his achievement in art. Fate had given him a prematurity of power that was in accurate ratio to the appointed brevity of his life, and, in the exercise and the development of his genius. Aubrey Beardsley never rested. He worked on always, with a kind of desperate courage, and with a degree of force and enthusiasm that is given only to the doomed man. He knew that he had no time to lose. At the age when normal genius is still groping for its method, he was the unerring master of his method. He died, having achieved masterpieces, at an age when normal genius has as yet done little of which it will not be heartily Normal genius is in ashamed hereafter. If it be struck down suddenly no hurry.

before its prime, it leaves no great legacy to us: we can only rail against Fate.

But Aubrey Beardsley was bound to die All his friends knew that as well young. The only wonder was that as he did. the fine thread of his life was not severed sooner. I remember that when I first saw him I thought I had never seen so utterly frail a creature—he looked more like a ghost than a living man. He was then, I believe, already in an advanced stage of pulmonary consumption. When I came to know him better, I realised that it was only by sheer force of nerves that he contrived to sustain himself. He was always, whenever one saw him, in the highest spirits, full of fun and of fresh theories about life and art. But one could not help feeling that as soon as he were alone he would sink down, fatigued and listless. with all the spirit gone out of him. One felt that his gaiety resulted from a kind of pride and was only assumed, as who should say, in company. Perhaps one underrated his strength. When he was alone, he must have worked at his drawings almost without intermission. a curious thing that none of his visitors ever found him at work, never saw any of his rough sketches nor even so much as his pen, ink, and paper. It was his pose to appear a man of leisure, living among Certainly, he seemed to have read, and to have made his reading into culture, more than any man I have ever met; though how he, whose executive industry was so great, managed to read so much, is a question which I have never quite solved: I can only suppose that he

^{*} A very fully illustrated interview with Mr. Beardsley appeared in The Idler for March, 1897, to which the reader may be referred for additional information, together with many more of the artist's best illustrations —[Ed. Idler].

read very rapidly. The literature of the Restoration and of the Eighteenth Century had always especially appealed to him. He delighted (oddly enough) in Voltaire. He was supposed to have read the whole of the Comédie Humaine, and he had all the modern schools of France at his finger-tips. He was a good Latin scholar, too, though ill-health had curtailed his schooldays, and he had practically had to teach himself all that he knew. His conversation had always the



charm of scholarship. Though not less modest than are most young men, he had strong opinions on most subjects, and he expressed himself with clear precision, and with wit. But he had not the physical strength which is necessary to the really great or inspiring talker. With him, there was always the painful sense of effort. I remember an afternoon I spent with him, at his house in Cambridge Street, soon after The Yellow Book was started. He was in great form, and showed even more than his usual wit and animation, as he paced up and down the room, talking, with all his odd, abrupt gestures, about

one thing and another, about everything under the sun. I am a very good listener, and I enjoyed myself very much. Next day I heard that his mother and his sister and a doctor had been sitting up with him till daybreak. He had been seized, soon after I had left, with a terribly violent attack of hemorrhage, and it had been thought, more than once, that he could not live through the night. I remember, also, very clearly, a supper at which Beardsley was present. After the supper we sat up rather late. He was the life and soul of the party, till, quite suddenly, almost in the middle of a sentence, he fell fast asleep in his chair. He had overstrained his vitality, and it had all left I can see him now, as he sat there with his head sunk on his breast: the thin face, white as the gardenia in his coat, and the prominent, harshly-cut features; the hair, that always covered his whole forehead in a fringe, and was of so curious a colour-a kind of tortoise-shell; the narrow, angular figure, and the long hands that were so full of power.

Last month, when Beardsley's death was announced in the newspapers, the general public must have read the news with some surprise. The "Beardsley boom," as it was called, had begun with The Yellow Book, and it had ceased with The Savoy, and Beardsley had, to all intents and purposes, been forgotten by the general public. For more than a year, he had been living in this or that quiet place to which invalids are sent. There were no new "Beardsley posters" on the London hoardings. The paragraphists of the London Press gradually let him be. His book of fifty collected drawings created no outcry, for even the book-reviewers could no longer assert that he did not know how to draw, and the tattlers at tea-parties had said all they had to say about him long ago, and had found other subjects for their discussion. But, while it lasted, how fierce the "Beardsley boom "had been! The public, as I need



ALI BABA IN THE WOOD.
(By kind permission of Lemard Smithers, Esq.)

hardly say, never admired Beardsley's drawings. It thought them hideous. If the "Beardsley woman" could have been incarnated, she would have been singularly unattractive. Then how could anyone admire her on paper? Besides, she was all out of drawing. Look at her arm! Beardsley didn't know how to draw. The public itself could draw better than that. Nevertheless, the public took great interest in all Beardsley's work, as it does in the work of any new artist who either edifies or shocks it. That Beardsley's work really did shock the public, there can be no doubt. There can be equally little doubt that the public like being shocked, and sympathy would, therefore, be superfluous. But, at the same time, there are, of course, people who do honestly dislike and deplore the morbid spirit that seemed to inspire Beardsley's work, and at such people I should not wish to sneer-on the contrary, I respect their feeling, which I know to be perfectly genuine. should I seek to deny that of Beardsley's work-more especially in some of his early work—there is much that is morbid. But it must be remembered that, when he first began to publish his drawings, he had hardly emerged from that school-boy age when the mind is generally apt to brood on unpleasant subjects, and much

of his work, which some people regarded as the sign of a corrupt nature, was really the outcome of a perfectly normal phase of mind, finding an abnormal outlet through premature skill in art. I think, too, that he had a boyish delight in shocking people, and that it

was often of mere mischief that he chose, as in many of his grotesques for the *Bon-Mots* series, to present such horribly ugly notions. Many

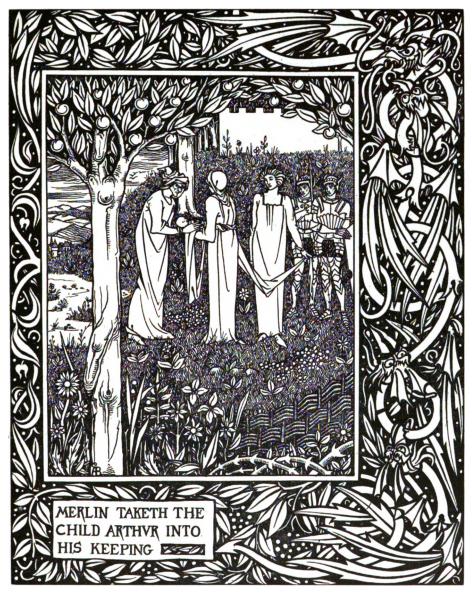
of those who knew Beardsley only through his work generally imagined that he must be a man of somewhat forbidding character. His powerful, morbid fancy really repelled them, and to them the very beauty of its expression may have seemed a kind of added poison. But I, or anyone else who ever saw him at his home, knew that whatever was morbid in his work reflected only one side of his nature. I knew him to be of a kindly, generous, and affectionate disposition; a devoted son and brother; a very loyal friend. He lived, when I first saw him and till some two years later, in Cambridge



(From " Bon-Mots.")

Street, where he shared a house with his mother and sister. Here, every Thursday afternoon, was held a kind of little salon, which was always well attended. Aubrey himself was always present, very neatly dressed, handing round cake and breadand-butter, and talking to each of his mother's guests in turn. There were always three or four new drawings of his passed from hand to hand, and he was always delighted with praise from any of his friends. I think it was at these little half-formal, half-intimate receptions that one saw him at his best. With all his affectations, he had that inborn kindliness which is the beginning of all good manners. He was essentially a good host.





From "Le Morte d'Arthur."

I have mentioned his grotesques for the volumes of *Bon-Mots*. These, if I am not mistaken, were among his very earliest published drawings, and simultaneously with them he was working at that great task, the illustration of *Le Morte d'Arthur*, on which he lavished such a wealth of skilful and appropriate

fancy. In the drawings for Le Morte d'Arthur he was still working, of course, under the influence of Sir Edward Burne-Jones—an influence which was oddly balanced by that of Japanese art in the drawings which he did, at this period, for his own pleasure, and of which "La Femme Incomprise" is a

good example. The well-known drawings which, later, he made for *The Yellow Book* were, with their black masses and very fine lines, arrived at

through simplification of the method in "La Femme Incomprise." These were the drawings that first excited the wrath of the general public and of the book-reviewers. Most of the qualified art-critics, also, were very angry. They did not know what to make of these drawings, which were referable to no es-

tablished school or known method in art. Beardsley was not at all discouraged by the contempt with which his technique was treated. On the contrary, he revelled in his unfavourable press-cuttings, knowing how little they signified. I think it was in the third number of The Yellow Book that two pictures by hithertounknown artists were reproduced. was a large head of Mantegna, by Philip Broughton; the other, a pastel-study of a Frenchwoman, by Albert Foschter. Both the drawings had rather a success with the reviewers, one of whom advised Beardsley "to study and profit by the

sound and scholarly draughtsmanship of which Mr. Philip Broughton furnishes another example in his familiar manner." Beardsley, who had made both the drawings and invented both the signatures, was greatly amused and delighted.

Meanwhile, Beardsley's acknowledged drawings produced a large crop of imitators, both here and in America. Imitators are the plague to which every original artist is exposed. They inflict the wounds which,

in other days, the critics were able to inflict. With the enormous increase of the Press and the wide employment of ignorant and stupid writers, bad criticism has become so general that criticism itself has lost its sting, and the time when an artist could be "snuffed out by an article" is altogether bygone. Nowadays, it is only through his imitators that an artist can be made to suffer. He sees his power vulgarised and distorted by a hundred apes. Beardsley's Yellow Book manner was bound to allure incompetent draughtsmen. It looked so simple and so easy—a few blots and random curves, and there you were. Needless to say, the results were appalling. But Beardsley was always, in many ways, developing and



modifying his method, and so was always ahead of his apish retinue. His imitators never got so far as to attempt his later manner, the manner of his Rape of the Lock, for to do that would have required more patience and more knowledge of sheer drawing than they could possibly afford. Such a design as the "Coiffing," which came in a late number of The Savoy, and which has often seemed to me the most exquisite thing Beardsley ever did, offered them no possible shortcut to talent. To trace the sequence of



The Return of Tannhäuser to the Venusberg.

(Drawn and presented to J. M. Dent, Esq.

Never before reproduced.)

technical phases through which Beardsley passed, would be outside the scope of this brief essay. But I should like to remind my readers that, as he grew older, he became gradually more "human," less curious of horrible things. Of this tendency the best example is perhaps his "Ave atque Vale," in *The Savoy*. Nothing could be more dramatic, more moving and simple, than the figure of that Roman who mourns his friend. The drawing was meant to illustrate one of Catullus' Odes, which Beardsley himself had thus rendered:

- "By ways remote and distant waters sped,
 Brother, to thy sad grave-side am I come,
 That I may give the last gifts to the dead,
 And vainly parley with thine ashes dumb:
 Since she who now bestows and now denies
 Hath ta'en thee, hapless brother, from mine eyes.
- "But lo! these gifts, the heirlooms of past years, Are made sad things to grace thy coffin-shell, Take them, all drenchèd with a brother's tears, And, brother, for all time, hail and farewell!"

These lines, which seem to me no less beautiful than the drawing itself, were written shortly before Beardsley left England for the last time. On the eve of his departure, he was received by Father Sebastian into the Catholic Church, to which he had long inclined. His conversion was no mere passing whim, as some people supposed it to be; it was made from true emotional and intellectual impulse. From that time to his death he was a pious and devout Catholic, whose religion consoled him for all the bodily sufferings he underwent. Almost to the very last he was full of fresh schemes for work. When, at length, he knew that his life could but outlast a few more days, he awaited death with perfect resignation.

He died last month, at Mentone, in the presence of his mother and his sister.

Thus ended this brief, tragic, brilliant life. It had been filled with a larger measure of sweet and bitter experience than is given to most men who die in their old age. Aubrey Beardsley was famous in his youth, and to be famous in one's youth has been called the most gracious gift that the gods can bestow. And, unless I am mistaken, he enjoyed his fame, and was proud of it, though, as a

great artist who had a sense of humour, he was perhaps, a little ashamed of it too, now and then. For the rest, was he happy in his life? I do not know. In a fashion, I think he was. He knew that his life must be short, and so he lived and loved every hour of it with a kind of jealous intensity. He had that absolute power of "living in the moment" which is given only to the doomed man-that kind of self-conscious happiness, the delight in still clinging to the thing whose worth you have only realised through the knowledge that it will soon be taken from For him, as for the school-boy you.

whose holidays are near their close, every hour—every minute, even—had its value. His drawing, his compositions in prose and in verse, his reading—these things were not enough to satisfy his strenuous demands on life. He was himself an accomplished musician, he was a great frequenter of concerts, and seldom, when he was in London, did he miss a "Wagner night" at Covent Garden. He loved dining-out, and, in fact, gaiety of any kind. His restlessness was, I suppose, one of the symptoms of his malady.

He was always most content where there was the greatest noise and bustle, the largest number of people, and the most brilliant light. "domino-room" at the Café Royal had always a great fascination for him: he liked the mirrors and the florid gilding, the little parties of foreigners and the smoke and the clatter of the dominoes being shuffled on the marble tables. Yet, though he took such a keen delight in all manifestations of life. himself, despite energy and his high spirits,

his frankness and thoughtfulness, seemed always rather remote, rather detached from ordinary conditions, a kind of independent spectator. He enjoyed life, but he was never wholly of it. This kind of aloofness has been noted in all great artists. Their power isolates them. It is because they stand at a little distance that they can see so much. No man ever saw more than Beardsley. He was infinitely sensitive to the aspect of all things around him. And that, I think, was the basis of his genius. All the greatest fantastic art postulates the power to see things, unerringly, as they are.

THE HEART OF DANDY FANE.

BY MARY BEAUMONT.

ILLUSTRATED BY S. H. VEDDER.



H E name of Dandy was given to him when he was three years old by the sister four years his senior. Richard was his "christened name." But

Dandy fitted him so closely that even his grandmother, who thought nicknames puerile, fell into using it.

It was not only his neatness and abhorrence of dirt in any form, but a certain finish of feature and limb, which distinguished him from his brothers and sisters, who differed little from other wellgrown and well-nourished children. clothes, too, were freer from tatters and stains than those of an ordinary active boy. There was a good deal of criticism expressed upon Mr. and Mrs. Fane's silence respecting Dandy's remarkable qualities. One set of acquaintances thought that he had fallen upon unappreciative parents, people probably of a less fine clay than his own; the other set credited the father and mother with unusual wisdom and a foresight that feared to spoil him by praise.

Those who held up Dandy to their own lads as a pattern of what a boy should be, and how a boy should look, would have been surprised indeed to hear that he, of all their children, gave his parents the most sorrowful anxiety.

He was the handsomest of the band. He had neither the passionate wilfulness of Thorold, the eldest son, nor the nervous temperament of Ted, the youngest He had a fine digestion and excellent health, and a cheerful activity in all his doings.

His courage was even remarkable, and it was a favourite Sunday pastime of Mr. Fane's to put his two elder lads upon a high cabinet in the drawing-room and encourage them with a "One, two, three" to jump a fair distance into his arms. The bigger child hesitated and shrank before the leap, but the little one, when the words were but half out, flew like a wild bird to his father, rosy, and panting with delight.

Yet it was this intrepid and pleasant child who brought a special shadow to his mother's eyes and weariness to her heart.

His old nurse ventured to say what others scarce dared to think.

"It's just this, ma'am, Master Dandy's somehow lost his heart."

"Had he one when he was born, Nurse?" said her mistress tremulously smiling. Yes, there was no doubt of that in Nurse's mind. Never would she cast such a thing at the Almighty, such a forgetting as that would be! But Dandy must find that heart, though he went "over stickle-back" to do it. Stickle-back being the good woman's metaphorical way of sketching difficulty.

The lack in him came out early. His baby arms were never round his mother's neck; he never kissed her for love's sake; and between his eyes would dawn a faint pucker of surprise when the other children hugged and embraced each other in the sweet manner of childhood.

As he grew older it was more noticeable,

at least his brothers and sisters became more aware of it, and a certain air of separate life, though not of interests, surrounded him.

When he was eight years old he came upon his youngest sister sobbing for the death of her canary, her head buried in her mother's lap.

"But why does she cry?" he asked.
"Silly to make such a noise!"

"Wouldn't you cry if you lost something you loved—if it died, I mean? I wonder what you would do if I died, Dandy?" Here was a chance of drawing a word of affection from him.

He had a delightful smile, and he smiled now. "Oh, I should be awfully sorry, I suppose, but I certainly shouldn't cry," he said, and vaulted over the sofa.

So it was through his youth. At school his independent ways and striking beauty made him a hero to the would-be dandies of the fourth form. With both master and boys he was popular, good as he was at his books and eminent in field sports—but he had no friends. It is doubtful if he knew the meaning of friendship. During the rest of his school-days and early terms at Oxford history repeated itself. pursued the same steady course of winning admiration and disillusionising love, and took a good deal of pleasure in being chosen for the Oxford boat. It was decided that politics should be his vocation; his mother vetoed the Church with something like passion, and Dandy rather liked the idea of a public life.

The February of his twenty-fourth year found the whole country in a General Election, and Mr. Fane urged his son to accept the invitation of the burgesses of Stonely for two reasons—viz., that it was a pretty safe seat, and that his own old college friend, James Elton, had considerable influence in the town.

So it was that Dandy found himself at Ashurst, the home of the Eltons, with a cordial invitation to make it his headquarters during the fortnight before the election.

He was entering the drawing-room, dressed for dinner, just as another door on the same side, leading out of the main hall, opened to admit another man.

The two stood still, for the briefest second embarrassed, Dandy in the inimitable Dandy-attitude, his hand holding the lapel of his coat, and his chin held high; the other making a movement of withdrawal. Then they both advanced and shook hands at the instance of the elder man.

"You are Mr. Fane," he said; "my name is Lorange. Your—I was going to say likeness—but I won't, I will say semblance—your semblance is all over the walls here!" His large observant eyes rested kindly on Dandy. But as they walked across the room, the young candidate for Stonely received a shock. His companion, who had seemed to him a rather short man, with remarkably broad shoulders, was really deformed, the twisted spine rising in a curve. The snow lay thick outside, and the room was chill in spite of its blazing fire.

"Do come and get warm," urged Mr Lorange. "I am on friendly enough terms here to play host until Mrs. Elton is ready. I live within five minutes' walk."

"Shall I have to meet a number of my—future constituents?" asked Dandy, drawing a chair close to the fender, and looking at the other. Mr. Lorange laughed.

"There is nothing like confidence," he observed, puckering his mouth quaintly; "but I sincerely hope that I and they will be your constituents, and we shall be here in force to-night!" He began to poke the fire.

"I wonder how old he is," meditated Dandy, smoothing his moustache, and considering the man opposite; "he doesn't look over nine-and-twenty, and yet he has a manner which you might call fatherly.

I suppose it has something to do with his ——" Mr. Lorange looked up suddenly and smiled. In spite of the deformity he had a natural dignity of movement and of expression; there was also much intellectual beauty in the moulding of his head and face, and nothing of the invalid in his hands, those tell-tales of the physical condition, they were firm and strong as Dandy's own.

But beneath his steady eyes the shadows told of pain, physical and mental.

The two chatted of the present political crisis until the door opened to Mrs. Elton, kind and welcoming, and a long string of guests came in by twos and threes at short intervals, local magnates and their wives. Dandy was taken possession of, and had scant time for breathing until he found himself seated at the dinner-table between his hostess and a well-known supporter of Female Suffrage, who wisely determined that Dandy should nail her colours to his mast at the beginning of his voyage.

Half-way through dinner, both ladies being occupied with their other neighbours, he leaned back in his chair and looked round. On both sides of the table talk had become general, and Mr. Elton's spare high-featured face was wrinkling with the mirth of his last jest. Not far from him sat Mr. Lorange, laughing at the apparent protests of a girl whose dainty head was turned from He saw, however, that the soft young rings of hair upon her temples were the colour of the inside of a chestnut in the light of the candles, and that the same warm tint strayed through the dark Then both pair of eyes coils behind. suddenly met his and were as quickly withdrawn—the two were talking of him, and in her momentary glance Dandy read an odd critical expression. another instant he was plunging into an explanation of his views upon the question of questions to the political lady. She was a clever woman, and handsome, and that made a considerable impression on the young candidate.

It was not until next morning that he came face to face with Mr. Lorange's partner of the evening before. She was introduced to him by Mrs. Elton as "my youngest daughter, Katherine."

"And are you really Dandy Fane?" said the girl.

"My dear Kitty, how familiar you are," exclaimed her mother over her shoulder as she greeted another guest. Katherine coloured.

"The fact is," continued Mrs. Elton, "my nephew, Walter Powell, was at school with you, and at one time constantly talked to us of Dandy Fane."

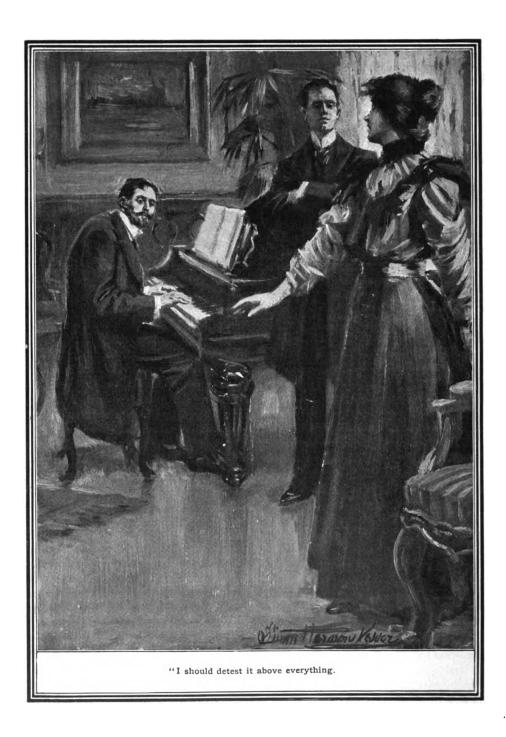
"Ah!" said Dandy shortly. Walter Powell (who had hoped for friendship) was one of the incomprehensibles who had, he felt, treated him badly. "But why that tone, Miss Elton?"

"Tone?" Katherine looked up at him innocently from the dark shelter of her lashes, which were astonishingly long and curved.

"Yes, as if I were a kind of Armless Man, or Living Skeleton, or some other horrid freak of Nature, of which you had heard——"

"And having seen, regretted," broke in the girl joyously, as if something delighted her. "Oh, Mr. Fane, you are far too sensitive for a Member of Parliament. Fancy what a life it would be if one were affected by every tone of every constituent, not to speak of their daughters." She turned to extinguish the spirit-lamp under the silver kettle, and in turning shot another critical flash from under the lashes. For the rest of the breakfast-hour he had time for nothing but talk bearing on his campaign, but his eyes were at liberty and managed to see a good deal of Katherine.

He liked girls, they were usually pleasant—too pleasant for his good indeed. But this girl was a new type to



him; he was accustomed to make an impression, and an impression that did not suggest criticism.

She was not beautiful, if regularity is beauty, but there was a gay vivacity of expression, and a delicious sweetness about her dimpling mouth and sunny eyes that bewitched the world at large. As the days went on Dandy too was bewitched, so far, that is, as a man may be—without a heart.

There were all kinds of hospitalities at Ashurst, whose master was every day more convinced that his young guest was specially created to represent Stonely.

Where was a shrewder head, and where a mind more free from fad? Mr. Elton abhorred fads.

Katherine and her father canvassed daily with Dandy, Mr. Lorange often being of the party, but of late his prostrating nervous headaches had kept him much indoors.

And Dandy and Katherine skated and walked and drove together in the intervals, which were not many, of serious business. Once, on returning from a walk, she gathered up the snow and hit him fairly between the shoulders, and he, at all other times so tenacious of propriety, thought it a winning proof of a childlike disposition.

Mr. Lorange was a tireless sympathiser with Dandy. Always an eloquent speaker, he was unusually eloquent in dwelling upon the candidate's capabilities.

But the candidate went through odd stages of feeling—if we may use so warm a word—with regard to him.' He did not like the obvious friendliness between him and his host's pretty daughter, and he was sometimes driven to console himself by dwelling upon the contrast between his own appearance and that of the older man.

For a few days Mr. Lorange had not been seen after the meetings of the committee, though Mr. Elton brought news of him as a constant canvasser. On returning from town one afternoon Dandy heard music in the drawingroom.

"By Jove!" he said to Kitty, who had come back with him and her father, "somebody's got a splendid touch!"

"It is Mr. Lorange," said the girl, quietly.

"Nonsense!" he exclaimed, astonished; "not that crippled fellow!"

She let her surprised and indignant glance rest on him. He was furious with himself for the breach of good taste: he was a connoisseur in taste.

"Shall we go in?" she said, coldly.

Once in the room, she went hurriedly up to Mr. Lorange. "Do go on," she pleaded; "it was beautiful."

There was a sadness in the player's eye, and his manner was curiously restrained. He glanced from one to the other of the pair before him.

"How well you both look. Ah, it is good to be young!" He half murmured the words, but Katherine caught them.

"It is very ungrateful to pretend to be old when one is young. Now, Mr. Lorange, do sit down again. Do you know German's 'Dances,' Mr. Fane?"

"What, do you want a dance? Perhaps you and Mr. Fane will take a turn after your cold drive?"

It was a mere pleasantry, but Kitty turned swiftly from the window out of which she was gazing. Tall, slim, and straight, she stood still, eyeing both men, her cheeks flaming.

"I should detest it above everything," she said, with emphasis, and swept from the room.

Temper in her was so rare that the two were aghast, but the elder quickly recovered himself.

"It must have been make-believe," he said, twisting round on the music-stool. "She is never angry."

"No," said Dandy, immensely relieved; "of course not. It was just her fun. What a fascinating creature she is! And what a favourite! Even the shopkeepers welcome her as if she had come to buy up the stock. It's her manner, I suppose."

He had no hesitation in speaking of her to this man—the old friend—set apart from ordinary life by circumstances.

Mr. Lorange moved restlessly.

"Or her heart," he observed, ironically; "though I allow that is an old-fashioned possession." There was a strong flush As if he couldn't discuss a pretty girl if he liked without the fellow giving himself airs and treating him as if he had taken a liberty! He champed the bit of his rage until he caught sight of his own well-knit frame in the round French mirror opposite, and was a little consoled.

"Poor chap!" he said to himself; "he's awfully handicapped; it is rather hard lines on him"; and he sauntered out to find Katherine. It was pleasant



Caught sight of Kitty flitting along the avenue.

upon his cheeks and a certain haughtiness in his eye as he looked steadily at Dandy. Then he resumed his former position at the piano, and struck the first notes of the "Frage" Sonata. "You will excuse my going on," he said, "music refreshes me."

Dandy inclined his head. He was exceedingly irritated, and longed to show his annoyance, but he had received so much help from the offender that there was nothing for it but to curb it in silence.

to know that he, who had always understood girls, began so undoubtedly to understand this one. After all, if she didn't pity a cripple—well, he supposed she would be less of a woman! Her disposition fitted her for many things—he stood by the hall fire, inserting the toe of his boot in the perforations of the fender—amongst them, possibly, the wife of a Member of Parliament!

A certain indulgence crept into his thoughts of the man still at the piano.

The fine music filled the hall; he was even glad that there was one solace in life for a being so manifestly destined for life's disappointments. "And he would be remarkably good-looking, but for his back," he allowed to himselt.

The morning of the youthful candidate's great day dawned. He awoke, in the shining of the sun, with a sense of elation. The other man might be in earnest and respectable, but he was not popular. Dandy had not a doubt of success. As he fastened his collar, he caught sight of Kitty flitting along the avenue, her macaw fastened to her wrist and fluttering over her head. She was in his colours—" As nearly, that is," she said, "as decency would allow." colour was yellow. She had chosen a cloth the tint of a fading oak-leaf, trimmed with brown fur, and in her hat was a rich knot of orange velvet. She carried a bunch of early daffodils.

"She darts through the trees like a ray of light," murmured Dandy.

Politics never made a stranger change than when they turned the man without a heart into a poet.

Kitty met him on the steps after breakfast.

"Father and you and I are going in together, Mr. Fane. Mother can't come till late. Now, haven't I done my best?" She pinched a fold of her dress in her fingers and showed it to him. "Could friendship further go? I feel just like a harlequin. And where do you think I found these?"

She dangled before him a few slips of paper tied together with a bit of yellow silk.

"They were scattered all over the studyfloor. I had to see what they were, of course; and the first piece I picked up began, 'Ladies and gentlemen!'"

He had made these notes for a speech after the success, and, other thoughts taking possession of him, had let them fall and be forgotten. Politics were robbing him

of his memory! His eyes rested on the girlish figure; a strange knocking and beating on the walls of his chest startled him, and drove the healthy colour from his face.

Kitty was manifestly astonished. She opened her lips to speak, but Mr. Elton, stern from excitement, hurried the young people into the open carriage below.

"Sit by me, Mr. Fane," he said authoritatively. "Katherine will sit on the other seat. I want a place for my foot—rather painful—gout in the family! And you cannot sit anywhere else to-day."

For a short time all the thought Dandy was capable of was of the girl opposite.

Pretty? She was lovely. She was yet more enchanting than lovely.

"That was Mr. Blend, our best grocer, and your influential supporter, Mr. Fane. You never bowed to him, and I can see he is in two minds about his vote!"

She bent towards him, her eyes gleaming with mischief.

O, this throbbing in his side!

"What did you say, Miss Elton? Mr. Blend!" He executed a dexterous manœuvre with a turn of his figure which left the prosperous tradesman wreathed in smiles. "I do wish you would change places with me," he pleaded.

But Kitty was firm. "Harlequin I will be, but not—not clown," she laughed. "You are the attraction of this pantomime!"

During the day he heard of her driving voters to the poll in her own little pony-carriage. The chairman of his committee told him of this, with a smile. "A most charming girl," he added. The world was brighter than the young candidate had known it, and the inhabitants of Stonely the only people worth representing. He caught sight of the knot of orange velvet in a little gathering of people across the way; the sunshine streamed from it as from a new sun. It was, indeed, a memorable day!

And his success crowned the evening.

It speaks well for politics that the first thought of Richard Algernon Fane was to telegraph to his mother. He never knew until many years afterwards that the crumpled paper was put with his babycurl among her treasures.

Later, nursing his hand, aching from congratulatory shakes, he whispered to Mrs. Elton: "Where is Miss Elton?" For Katherine was not in the crowd.

"She went home to sit with—with a sick friend," said Mrs. Elton, moving away towards the door. "If you are ready, Mr. Fane," she added, "we will go."

She might be in the study. She was not to be found in the other rooms.

There was a soft felt hat upon the hall-table. It was Mr. Lorange's. "He has been down with one of his beastly head-aches. Mr. Elton told me so. He will be glad to know too," he thought, and went whistling down the corridor. His head still rang with the cheers of the people, and his step was proud and free.

The study door stood a little ajar; an

unconscious instinct made him pause; he heard voices within, Kitty's voice and another. She was speaking eagerly.

"And would you never have told me, Ray, if I hadn't asked you why you stayed away so much?"

A man's voice answered her, it was Mr. Lorange's.

"My darling," he said, "how could I being what I am?"

"And I should have been miserable all my life! Mother knows that I should."

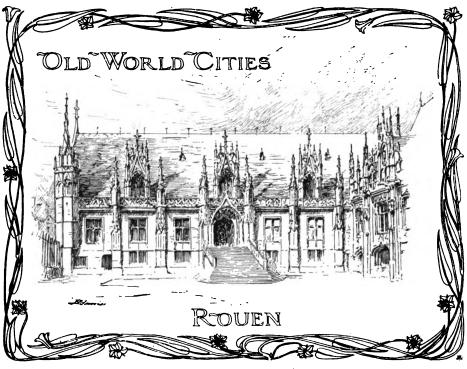
"But look at others—at Fane, for instance."

"O, how can you? Why, he hasn't got any heart; Walter always said so. And I don't think him a bit handsome—so wooden!"

Dandy leaned against the wall. He had the appearance of one unsuccessful and discrowned. Yet he was the accepted representative of Stonely.

Upon his broad breast the new heart hammered and beat. For the heart of Dandy Fane was found.





The Palais de Justice.

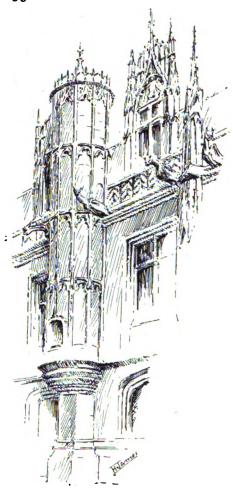
BY THEODORE ANDREA COOK.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. JAMES.

IN TWO PARTS.-PART I.

HE three great rivers that flow from the heart of France to her three seas have each a character of their own. The grey and rapid current of the Rhone, swollen with the melting of the glaciersnows, rolls past the imperishable monuments of ancient Rome, and through the oliveyards and vineyards of Provence falls into the blue waves of the southern sea. The sandy stream of Loire goes westward past the palaces of queens and the walled pleasure-gardens of Touraine, whispering of dead royalty. But the Seine pours out its black and toil-stained waters northward between rugged banks, hurrying from the capital of France to bear its cargoes through the Norman cliffs into the English Channel.

If Paris, Rouen, and Le Havre were but one town, whose central highway is this great river of the north, it would be at the vital spot, the very market-cross, that Rouen has sprung up and flourished through the centuries, at that dividing line where ships must stay that sail in from the sea and cargo-boats set out that ply the upper stream with commerce for the inland folk. Rouen has in its turn been the most southerly city of a Norman Duke's possessions, then the central fortress of an Angevin Empire that stretched from Forth to Pyrenees, then the northern bulwark of the kings of Paris against the opposing cliffs of England. It has sent out fleets upon the sea, and armies upon land. It has been independent of its



Tourelle of the Palais de Justice, Rue St. Lo.

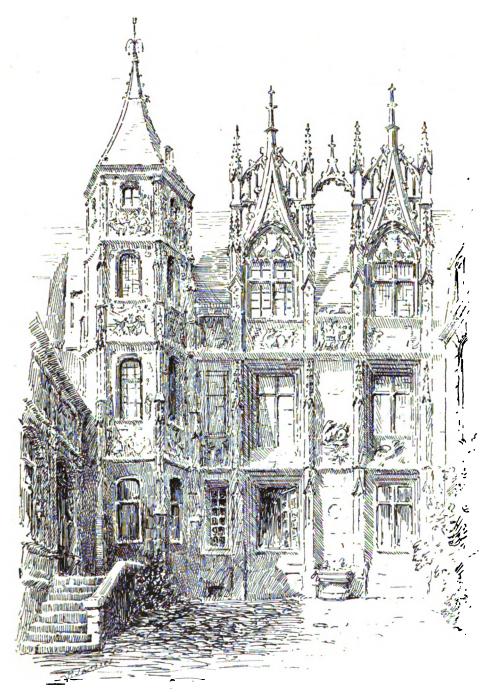
neighbours; it has led them against a common foe, and it has undergone with them a national disaster.

To understand something of the origin of the town, it is far better to come there for the first time by river, by the highway that has suffered least change since Rouen was a town at all. Yet, as from the Seine you look upon the modern city, it is difficult to realise all that has disappeared. The old walls and battlements have gone, and all the ancient keeps save one. The quays are crowded with a busy throng of workmen; on the stream are ships from every quarter of the world, great cranes are hoisting merchandise out of their holds and

distributing it into the markets of the town, or into the barges for Paris and the Ile de France. For this is the limit of the maritime Seine, and here, where the tide of ocean throbs upon her quays, it was but natural that the strength and commerce of Rouen should increase and multiply. Mouton de Rouen qui a toujours la patte levée, says the old Norman proverb, and the lamb upon the Arms of Rouen has raised her foot in readiness for the travel that has always been the characteristic of her sons.

The "Old Rouen" you will see first is almost completely a French Renaissance city of the sixteenth century. Of older buildings you will find only the slightest and most imperfect remnants, and as you pass monstrosities more modern you will involuntarily close your eyes. Palais de Justice, in the Cour des Comptes, in the Bureau de Finances, are preserved the sixteenth-century buildings that held the municipal activity of the town. In the Hôtel Bourgtheroulde is an example of the private dwellings of the same time. So these four may be taken as types from which something can be learnt of the life of the men with whom the history of Rouen is most intimately associated, while down the Rue de l'Epicerie you may look for a moment into that humbler and less spacious form of habitation in which the people and the workers lived their days, making up for the poverty of their own surroundings by the magnificence of that great Cathedral which rose above the low horizon of their roofs, and opened its doors to poor and rich alike. These buildings that have so long outlived their inhabitants may be taken as the background-like the permanent stone scenery in a Greek theatre -to the shifting kaleidoscope of manycoloured life in the old city.

In the place itself you will see scarcely a trace of the great personages whose names have glittered in its list of sieges, battles, massacres, pageants, and triumphal entries. The story of a town is



HÔTEL BOURGTHEROULDE.

not a drum-and-trumpet chronicle of the Kings and Queens. It is the tale of all those domestic and municipal details which from their very unimportance have well-nigh disappeared. To hear that, we must go to the Rouen

> "des vieux pignons aigus Comme des épines dorsales Bombant les angles contigus Sur les solives transversales... Les Logis causent de tout près, Et l'ombre leur est coutumière, On jurerait qu'ils font exprès De manquer d'air et de lumière."

What would not many of us give to listen to that muttered gossip, to the scandal that one old roof-tree whispered to another whilst it leant across the narrow street, as some old woman mumbles secrets to her neighbour with bleared eyes winking beneath her shaggy brows? Or what would we not give for that "quarter of an hour with Rabelais" which so many have desired, that we might hear the talk Rue de l'Epicerie. of Pantagruel and



Panurge who journeyed with Epistemon, Eusthenes, and Carpalim to Rouen on their way from Paris to take ship at Honnefleur? Then we should know why the towns that grow so thickly round the capital become more sparsely scattered towards the sea; we should appreciate the gallantry of Eusthenes towards the Norman ladies; we might savour faintly, as from afar, the bouquet of that Vin blanc d'Anjou which Pantagruel bought in some old hostelry beside the Eau de Robec. Rouen was rich and full of prosperous merchants then, and bought sheep (from farmers like Dindenault) to make her famous woollen draperies, "les bons fins draps de Rouen."

Across the valley-

"Il était un roi d'Yvetot, Peu connu dans l'histoire, Se levant tard se couchant tôt, Dormant fort bien sans gloire Et couronné par Jeanneton D'un simple bonnet de coton, Dit on. Oh, oh, oh, oh! ah, ah, ah, ah! Quel bon petit roi c'était là, La, La!!"

> And his jovial Majesty must often have gone down into the city to those fêtes and processions that the Middle Ages were so fond of, the earliest of which, begun in 1070, was called the Fête aux Normands. Two years afterwards was founded the Confrérie de la Vierge, of which Pierre Daré, Lieutenant-General and Councillor of the King, was elected "Prince" in 1186. To him is due the beginning of those

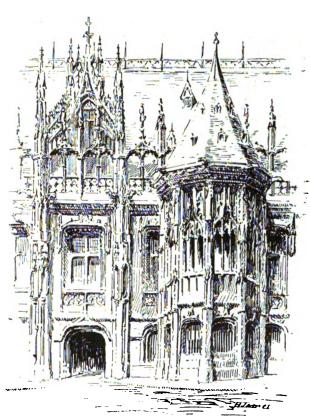
"Palinods" sung in honour of the Virgin at St. Jean des Près, and called the Puy de Conception, like the Puy d'Amour of the Provençal Troubadours. The name probably originated in the refrain which ran through all the various metres allowed in the poems which were sent in for competition, as Pierre Grognet describes in 1533-

> "On y presenté les rondeaulx Beaulx pallinotz et chans royaulx Et sappelle celle journee La feste du Puy honorée."

In these rhymes are preserved just

those details of the people's life for which we have been looking. Great events and mighty personages in the world outside are passed unnoticed. The important trivialities of the householder's existence are the main theme of every verse. The *Muse Normande* of David Ferrand is a collection of such fragments of many "Concours des Palinods" from its be-

ginning his death in 1660. They are chiefly written in that "langue purinique o u gros normand" which was the distinctive patois of the working classes, and especially of those "purins" or "ouvriers de la draperie" who dwelt in the parishes of Martainville, of Saint Vivien, and Saint Nicaise in the city. You may hear it to this day n the villages of Caux. Here the gos-



Courtyard of Palais de Justice, Room of Louis XII.

sip of the populace is reproduced, and you read of the burdens laid upon the people, of the abundance of wine (which did away with any need for beer), of the rivalries of corporations, of the amusements of the town, the mysteries and Miracle Plays, the Basoche, and the rough practical joking of the populace. One of the most important subjects, for our purpose, in all David Ferrand's verse

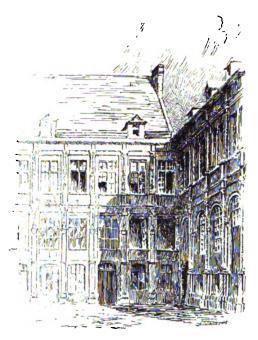
is that famous "Boise de Saint Nicaise round which a seventeenth-century war waged, more bitterly and fiercely disputed than half the contests which take up the pages of your sober royal histories. You must know that this "Boise de Saint Nicaise" was an enormous beam of wood, chained by iron bars and links to the church walls, where every evening the

gossips used to gather in the cemetery and talk over the scandal of the parish, or regulate the proceedings of the town. Thrice in 220 years had Rouen been besieged, once by the English and twice by its own countrymen, and each time the virtues of the famous "boise" had saved it from pillage and desecration. Upon its black and shininglength the disputes o f every

century had been heard and settled: masters had brought up their quarrels with the workmen, merchants had wrangled over sharp practice in their business, girls had been summoned to receive a lecture from the elders of the parish on the flightiness and immodesty of their behaviour. No parish had ever such a palladium of its dignity. And you can easily conceive the derision and contempt with which the

mighty "boise" was treated by the boys of the rival and neighbouring parish of St. Godard, who used to sing—

"Les habitants de Saint Nicaise Ont le cœur haut et fortune basse."



Cour des Comptes.

This was a bad pun on the chaur, or choir, of the church that was too good for its worshippers. For there was a great contrast between the populations on each side of the dividing line. Saint Godard was filled with magistrates and mighty men of law, who lived in sumptuous houses and carved their coats of arms upon their massive sideboards, who quoted Malherbe, and approved the early efforts of a young man called Corneille, and prided themselves upon the delicacy and scholarship of their speech. In Saint Nicaise, on the contrary, you heard little save the "purinique," or patois of the workmen; in narrow, dark, and twisting streets the drapers and weavers and dyers carried on their trades and earned their bread by the sweat of their brow. Their children had to work early for their living, and helped the business of their parents when still in the first years of their youth. No wonder these who "scorned delights and lived laborious days" laughed at the effeminacy of their neighbours, saying that

> "Aux enfants de Saint Godard L'esprit ne venait qu' à trente ans."

By 1632 this feeling of rivalry and mutual distrust had been sharpened into positive hatred; for, of course, when the troubles of the Ligue had come, and St. Godard had declared for its old kings and saints, Saint Nicaise had openly professed belief in Villars and Mayenne, and almost raised a chapel to the memory of Jacques Clement the assassin; and you may imagine the gibes of Royalist St. Godard when the tide of fortune turned against the Athens and Sparta were not rebel parish. more different, or more hostile. One day the smouldering fires broke into flame. It was the day of a procession when, at the very meeting line of the two parishes, the clergy of St. Godard, splendid in gold and embroidery, with a cross of gold before them, and behind them a line of ladies richly dressed and escorted by red-robed magistrates, were moving in procession, with the banner at their head presented by the Lady President of Grémonville, whereon the figure of the patron saint was embroidered upon crimson velvet hung round with cloth of gold. Consider the disdain of these fine ladies for the modest little gathering that walked, across the way, beneath a little banner of ordinary taffetas bearing a tiny effigy of Saint Nicaise, worked in worn colours of old faded pink, and followed by a crowd of workmen clad in blouse and sabot and rough woollen At a certain point the contrast became unbearable. The workmen, with a shout of fury, made a sudden rush upon that hateful new banner of Saint Godard, tore it from the standard-bearer's hands, and threw it in the muddy waters of the boundary-stream. How the two processions got home after that you may imagine

for yourself. It says much for the control of the respective clergy that there were no open blows at once. But that night Saint Nicaise was vulgarly merry, and Saint Godard wrapped its wrongs in ominous and aristocratic silence. What the songs were that those workmen sang in the cemetery of Saint Nicaise you can read in a queer little book written by one "Abbé Raillard" in 1557, an "Abbé des Conards," who imitates Rabelais when he tries to be original, but is of far more value when he merely reproduces what he heard, to wit, "la fleur des plus ingénieux jeux chansons et menus flaiollements d'icelle jeunesse puérille, receuilly de plusieurs rues lieux et passages où il estoit répandu depuis la primitive récréation, aaze, jeunesse et adolescence Normande rouennoise."

Here is a chorus which no doubt resounded on that night of victory over St. Godard—

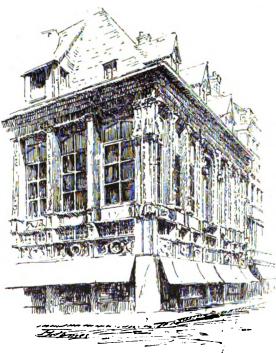
"Jay menge un œuf
La lange dun bœuf
Quatre vingt moutons
Autant de chapons
Vingt cougnons de pain
Ancore ayge faim,"

or this, again-

"Gloria Patri ma mere a petri
Elle a faict une gallette
Houppegay, Houppegay j'ay bu du cidre
Alotel (bis)."

Unfortunately, after having gone shouting to bed, the men of St. Nicaise slept sound without a thought of possible reprisals. But the young bloods "across the way" were all alert. Waiting till the change of guard at Saint Hilaire should make that customary noise of clinking arms and tramping feet which every citizen would recognise and forget, sixty of the bravest champions crossed the Rubicon and advanced in the depth of the darkness to the cemetery of St. Nicaise. With heavy labour they broke up the sacred chains, detached the time-worn rivets, and dragged off the famous timber, the "Boise" of Saint Nicaise, the palladium of the

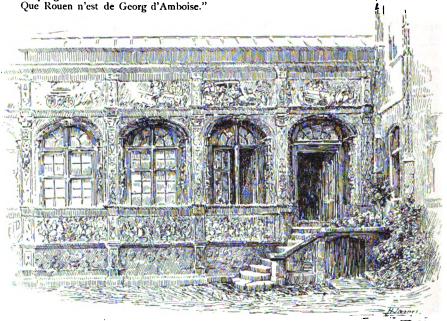
obnoxious parish. The next morning the gossips discovered to their stupefaction that there was no log to sit upon! Following a few traces that were left here and there, the horrified drapers and tanners found the smoking remnants of their cherished wood scattered in the square of Saint Hilaire, surrounded by a laughing crowd of the children and young men of St. Godard. Vengeance was plotted on that very evening, and a smart skirmish took place up and down the streets of the aristocratic quarter, in which the victory of the velvet doublets only roused redoubled ardour in the men of smocks and The Palais de Justice leather aprons. and the majesty of the Law was obliged



Bureau de Finance.

to intervene. The Duc de Longueville, Governor of the Province, tried to smooth over the crisis with the gift of a new and most enormous log; but nothing could replace the relic that was gone. At last the good priests of each parish set to work to heal the breach, and soundly damned each hardened sinner who attempted to break the good peace of the town with further quarrels. Messire François de Harlai, Archbishop of Rouen, aided their efforts, and at last the feud died down; but the event was never forgotten:

"Donc qu'o mette o calendrier Qu'o dix huitiesme de Janvier Fut pris et ravy notte BOISE Boise dont j'etions pu jaloux Et pu glorieux entre nous Que Rouen n'est de Georg d'é life of that hurrying sixteenth century. Painters and sculptors worked as in a frenzy, covering canvas by the acre and striking whole armies of statues into serried ranks of stone. Men fought with swords that weaker generations can with difficulty flourish in the air; they wore armour that would make a cart-horse stagger. Quarrels, duels, riots, rapes, drinking bouts, and gallantries followed one another in a hot



Hôtel Bourgtheroulde (lateral jaçade).

Such were the people with whom the streets of Rouen were filled when the Palais de Justice was first built and used throughout the sixteenth century. With such a noisy, rough, and boisterous crowd were narrow causeways like the Rue de l'Epicerie crammed. From the great square of the Market Halls that little street ran up towards the Portail des Calendes of the Cathedral, whose west window looks down upon the river. As has been pointed out, the best of that old life that remains to us is its buildings; and from them and a few other indications we can imagine the fruitful, busy, breeding

succession that takes away the breath of modern straightlaced commentators. Life that came easily into the world was spent as recklessly, and blood flowed as plentifully as wine. Rough horse-play and rude practical joking was of the essence of humorous courtliness. Immense processions, filled with life and colour, jesting at everything sacred or profane, crowded with symbols decent and indecent, made up the sum of public happiness. Behind everything lay the heavy hand of a merciless and blood-stained Law; once beneath the power of "justice," the miserable culprit had little hope of escaping before

the wheels of Juggernaut had crushed the life out of him, and he was lucky who died quickest at the executioner's hands. The gargoyles that peer and crouch above the Rue St. Lo from the walls and turrets of the Palais de Justice are a fair type of the demons of chicanery whose walls they guarded. Yet the men of those days could build nothing, for whatever hideous purposes, that had not its especial and appropriate beauty. As you turn into the spacious courtyard of this Palais on your way from the "Gros Horloge," you see to your left the magnificent open staircase that leads up by broad and easy steps to the great Salle des Procureurs above. On the roof the twisted turrets, and the sculptured crests upon the windows (that are seen in lesser proportions in the Hôtel Bourgtheroulde), carry the eye upwards with that passion for the rising line which all the best French architecture possesses. Exactly opposite the entrance, a graceful tourelle breaks with the curve of its bowwindow the straight line of the wall, and holds the favourite octagonal apartment of the King, who planned the whole. And the other municipal buildings of the town are, in their smaller way, almost as fine.

There is a view, drawn by Miss Helen James to illustrate these lines, which has not been seen for almost two centuries, and is very likely to be hidden by new masonry before two years are passed. is the exquisite angle in the courtyard of the Cour des Comptes. The round arches on the right show where the Chapel of the Advocates was set. This plan is reproduced (at the corner of the Rue des Quatre Vents, behind) in the exquisite Renaissance doorway which gives admittance to these buildings from the other But the flat pilasters and the square windows, with their carvings in low relief upon the wall in front, have only just been

rescued from absolute decay, and do not seem likely ever to be given the space and light in which they were meant to look beautiful for ever. The angle of the Bureau des Finances that has been drawn for me is opposite the west door of the Cathedral. Its delicate carvings for some ten feet up have been obscured and mutilated by the hideous vulgarities of shopfronts and advertisements, but enough is left to show what used to be the office of Thomas Bohier, that luckless Général des Finances who built Chenonceaux on the Loire only to lose it to Diane de Poitiers, the favourite of Henri II.

In the Hôtel Bourgtheroulde you may imagine some rich citizen at home in the first days of Francis I. The carvings on the wall upon the left as you go in represent the pageant of the Cloth of Gold, and above them are scenes taken from the Triumph of Petrarch. Upon the wing that faces the entrance are carved scenes from country life, shepherds and fishermen, and men a-hunting, in such utter defiance of every ordinary rule of stonework that the conclusion is inevitable that they are tapestries reproduced by chiselling. Behind those wonderful windows the clerks of the Comptoir d'Escompte sit scribbling long accounts and cashing bills, and the master for whom all that stone was pierced and polished like a jewel-case has disappeared into complete oblivion, from which only the disputes of archæologists have rescued him. Of such monuments by unknown hands, for unknown owners, the town is full, though few are of such perfected and careful beauty. But to believe this you must go to Rouen and see for yourself. When you have seen, you may perhaps be ready to read more about it and to understand.

> "Là dans le passé tu peux vivre, Chaque monument est un livre, Chaque pierre un souvenir."



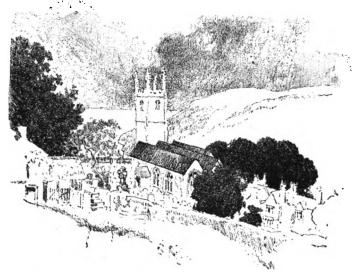


HEN, with well-founded anticipations of delight, I take up The Sundering Flood, The William Morris (Longmans, Master's Last Green & Co.), I am at Romance. once transported from these days of wars and rumours of wars to the region of a poet's fancy which knows neither time nor latitude. With all the delight of living for a while among the worthy folk separated seemingly for ever by the broad, swift current of the Sundering Flood, those painful, inevitable words, "It is the last," will keep obtruding themselves upon my mind. The last romance of a man whose power in this peculiar literary field was unique; the last romance from the pen of one of the most gifted of the moderns; one who delighted in, and had a happy genius for making us delight in, a past that history knows not. It is a standing wonder that the stories of William Morris, really unlike anything that had gone before, and yet thoroughly de-modernised, should have succeeded as they have in taking the attention of a public too prone to revel in detective stories and the glorification of matter of fact. It is strange, but it makes us pluck up heart of grace when considering the majority of so-called "popular"

There is hope for the public which—either by purchase or by loan from a circulating library—gets hold of and reads the wonderful series of prose romances, the tale of which is now, alas! closed with the publication of The Sundering Flood. The brain which could have conceived and fashioned a story such as this was yet at the height of its power. and although it is sad to think of that brain touched into eternal inaction, there yet comes also the reflection that it was better for his fame—better, perhaps, for the long continuance of his healthful optimistic teaching—than if he had lived on to give us-as old age has done before—the very lees of the rare wine of genius. By way of frontispiece to the neat and beautifully printed volume we have a map wherein the author sought to aid the imaginings of his readers, and which certainly gives us, in cunning fashion. a feeling of the reality of the world into which we are introduced. While reading the story, written throughout with that subtle artistry which results in limpid clearness of diction such as we have always associated with the prose of one whom we fondly knew as the Master, it is pleasant to turn back to the map and find exactly the spot at which some stirring

event occurred. Here, we say to ourselves, here it was that the boy Osberne slew the wolves from which his grandfather and Surly John fled; here it was that he met Steelhead; and here, in happy hour, he first encountered—separated by the Sundering Flood—the dear young Elfhild. The dwellers on either side of the Flood—those of the East Dales and of the West Dales—were dear friends, although they might never come near enough for handshaking, and at certain seasons

sets out upon a quest destined—for Mr. Morris was ever true to the optimism of old romance—to succeed to his heart's desire. The book is as fine as anything which the poet had given us before; it has all the old fascination, all the old glamour, making the season of its publication a memorable one in the annals of the true book-lover. It will rank with those books which never grow old, with those wonderful stories, half fact, half faery, which make perennial



Morwinstow Church. By Joseph Pennell.

(From "Highways and Byeways in Devon and Cormvall." By permission of Macmillan & Co., Ltd.)

they would gather on both sides of the Flood and hold friendly revel. Akin in friendship and goodwill, they seemed eternally separated by the Sundering Flood, and the love of Osberne and Elfhild seemed as though it never could be consummated by their union. The hero and his dear lonely girl have friends, however, with something more than the power of mere mortals, and they are heartened to hope. The West-Dalers are harried by a foe, and Elfhild disappears, so that the over-river courtship is seriously interrupted. Despairing at first, but hoping later owing to friend Steelhead, Osberne

appeal to imaginative readers of all ages.

Tre, Pol, Pen and their Neigh highways and byeways of England's two westernmost counties there is a peculiar fascination about a book which came out at Christmas last, and which is now re-issued in a second edition. This is Highways and Byeways in Devon and

Cornwall, by Arthur H. Norway, with illustrations by Joseph Pennell and Hugh Thomson (Macmillan & Co., Ltd.), a volume which has been fortunate in

every way—in its author, its illustrators, its printers, and its binders. I remember idling over this volume on its first appearance some months ago, and take it up once more with a vivid sense of pleasure, knowing that there is in it much that is more attractive, more deeply interesting, than is to be found in many works of fiction, Mr. Norway set out from Axminster, made his way to Lyme Regis, and thennow along the coast, and now making inland detours-went round by Land's End and along the more rugged side of the peninsula to Lynton. The record of what he saw and what he heard should be in the hands. not only of all who dwell in the west countree and delight in its manifold fascinations, but also of all who, like the present

idler, have spent some memorable holidays there. Sitting among my books in my latest caravanserai on a hill in the Garden of England, I am at once transported to the grand loneliness of Dartmoor, to the rocky coast about Falmouth and its neighbouring "porths," to the surf-thundered cliffs along by Bude, to the quiet peacefulness of Morwinstow, and to the quaint picturesqueness of Clovelly. The author has placed all lovers of the West deeply in his debt, and he has been ably seconded by the two celebrated artists whose drawings are liberally scattered through the four hundred pages of the volume, and whose quality I am courteously enabled to "sample" in the accompanying illustra-



"A Golden Morning." Drawn by Geo. C. Haité, R.B.A.

(From "Side-lights of Nature in Quill and Crayon." By permission o,

Kegan Paul & Co., Ltd.)

tions. To those who really know the west country Mr. Hugh Thomson's picture will need no explanation, but for the benefit of those who do not, I may say that it depicts a scene in an old ballad which, I am sorry to say, Mr. Norway has not seen fit to give in its entirety. The lines begin "with a comic lilt inexpressibly grateful to the ear."

"Tom Pearse, Tom Pearse, lend me thy grey mare,

All along, down along, out along Lee;
For I want for to go to Widdecombe Fair
With Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney,
Peter Davey, Dan'l Whiddon, Harry
Hawk, Old Uncle Tom Cobleigh and all.
Chorus: Old Uncle Tom Cobleigh and all."

Those who know the situation of Widdecombe-in-the-Moor can best appreciate the fact that the borrowed mare did not reach her destination, for Tom Pearse from the top of a hill saw that she had fallen.

"So Tom Pearse's old mare her took sick and died,

All along, out along, down along Lee;
And Tom he sat down on a stone and he cried,
With Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney,
Peter Davey, Dan'l Whiddon, Harry
Hawk, Old Uncle Tom Cobleigh and all."
Literary distinction of a new sort has been added to this quaint verse by the fact that Mr. Walter Raymond borrowed from it the name of "Tom Cobleigh," under which, with "Gentleman Upcott's Daughter," he first won fame as a singularly fine writer of the romance of country life.

"Nature the old Nurse."
The next book which I take up makes special appeal to the individual task of one who has recently removed

without the

"Exhalations of dirt and smoke,
And all th' uncleanness which does drown
In pestilential clouds a populous town,"

as worthy old Abraham Cowley bluntly put it. The volume is rather clumsily entitled Side-lights of Nature in Quill and Crayon, written by Edward Ticknor Edwardes, drawn by George C. Haité, F.L.S., R.B.A. (Kegan Paul & Co., Ltd.). I cannot recall having read anything of Mr. Edwardes' before, but Mr. Haité's work as a true nature-loving artist has long been familar to me, and to others who also know that work, abundant recommendation of this volume is comprised in the mere statement that it has no fewer than three-and-twenty page illustrations by one of the most sympathetic and observant of living landscape artists. Mr. Edwardes attempts no marshalling of natural history "facts," but he does something that is more pleasing, if less informing; he writes brightly and feelingly about all the sights and sounds that come unbidden to whoso walks the

lanes and downs of Kent and Sussex with open eyes and ears. His eighteen chapters describe many aspects of Nature in her ever varying moods from January to December, and describe them on the whole with peculiar felicity, but at times his opulence in adjectives approaches dangerously near to the abomination of "fine" writing. Such a seeming pun as the flowing of the "spring-tide of blossom" should have been rigorously excised, and the likening of the blackbird's song to the music of operatic melodrama seems woefully out of taste. I find it impossible, too, to agree with Mr. Edwardes in calling the robin's song a sad one; "Nature's pessimist," forsooth, his singing always seems to be bright and joyous, as of Hope persistent through all the changes time can bring. Edwardes' work, bright and readable in itself, is enriched immeasurably by Mr. Haité's beautiful series of landscapes.

Among our present-day Idling purveyors of fiction, Mr. W. among Fiction. Pett Ridge has taken a distinctive place as one knowing thoroughly, and able neatly to chronicle, the sayings and doings of metropolitan suburbia. His latest book, Three Women and Mr. Frank Cardwell (C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd.), is a characteristic piece of work which should serve to strengthen this writer's hold upon his public. Mr. Pett Ridge has apparently set out to show how far it is that the opportunity makes the man-and woman makes the opportunity! When we are first introduced to Mr. Frank Cardwell, he is distinguishing himself as a cricketer on the green of his native village, and is on the eve of his departure for London to become junior clerk in a solicitor's office. Sent on a business errand to a client-a retired singer—he makes an impression upon her, and a still deeper one upon her companion. The upshot of it is that his "opportunity" is made, and, all unconscious of his deus ex machiná, Mr. Frank finds himself getting on in the world. Then, suddenly, when he has re-met the third woman, he is made aware of his indebtedness, and heroically faces a difficult situation, though it need scarcely be said that all comes well in the end. The author succeeds most signally where he allows himself to employ the exaggeration

Dickensian touches (especially in the Bennett ménage) the London life of to-day. An up-to-date romance, too, fittingly forms the third volume of the new series of Latter-Day Stories. An Egyptian Coquette, by Clive Holland (C. A. Pearson, Ltd.), will be read with avidity by that public which so readily



"Tom Pearse's old mare her took sick and died." By Hugh Thomson. From "Highways and Byeways in Devon and Cornwall."

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of the caricaturist, and although two of the three women to whom the hero owed so much are not particularly well individualised, the story as a whole is distinctly readable. Mr. Pett Ridge, I take it, is a loving student of the works of Charles Dickens, for throughout his book we have suggestions of that master painter of the humours of humanity; he describes with absorbs all books bearing upon things occult. The tale is one of the mysteries of hypnotism, and deals with the powers of a clever young journalist, Evan Grant. He recalls a young woman from a seemingly hopeless hypnotic trance in consequence of a dream or vision, and (in consequence of the same vision) gets sent upon an expedition to Egypt, where

he discovers a beautiful girl-either marvellously mummified or deeply entranced -some three thousand years of age. Scientists are divided in opinion as to whether it is a woman in a trance or a woman's body marvellously embalmed. At length Grant tries his powers, with startling results. Mr. Clive Holland's story might well be taken to lighten the tedium of a long railway journey. Chapter of Accidents, by Mrs. Hugh Fraser (Macmillan & Co.), is just such a bright story of boy and girl love as seems always to be in brisk demand at the circulating libraries. Simple in plot, it is yet sufficiently interesting to keep one's attention to the close, and therefore it may be considered successful as a story. In style, it is both good and bad -good in occasional passages and epigrammatic phrases, but bad at times in a very different fashion: in longwinded sentences and fine writing, which result in some of the most marvellous mixture of metaphor that I have seen. On pages 93 and 94 I should like to draw the writer's attention to one terrible sentence in which the ocean is spoken of under some dozen or so of similes. must find space to give the portentous passage in its entirety, for nought but itself could be its parallel: " The windswept ocean, unheard by day, was filling the air with its rhythmic music, the wave whispering low as it leisurely gathered its strength far off under the stars; singing soft and full in the ever-quickening rush towards land; mounting, toppling, quivering in a magic network of changing lines as it crossed the spread silver of the bay, pausing, poised at the leap ere it burst from those mystic bands to crash on the shore with a roar of triumph, and tumble its garnered snow and molten silver in one spendthrift flood, to fling high a thousand veils of film that broke in showers of jewels on the air-and at last, sobbing, sighing, grating slow over each stone and pebble of the sands, to

sink back like a lover torn from his beloved, and be sucked away in the under darkness as the next great billow came hurrying in from the sea!"

Contrast is curiously ex-Mr. W. E. hibited when I take up the Henley's Collected next of the volumes which I Poems. have selected for present con-I lay aside the prose of one sideration. whose magic could make us live in a past of his own imagining, to revel in the unconventional rhythms of one who is a true seer-one who faces with an unconquerable stoicism the problems of life with its strange mixture of pains and pleasure. That a certain section of the reading public has come properly to appreciate Mr. Henley's poetry may, I suppose, be taken for granted, seeing that the volume of Poems by William Ernest Henley (David Nutt), published at the beginning of this year, is already, within a couple of months, issued in a second edition. Another hopeful sign, I take it, that the tit-bit-ising of literature has not yet entirely destroyed all taste for literary excellence. Whenever I think of Mr. Henley's poetry two things occur to my memory: one, that magnificent utterance of stoical selfreliance addressed "To R. T. H. B.," and the other a passage from one of "the London Voluntaries "-a passage, nay,

"And behold
A rakehell cat—how furtive and acold!
A spent witch homing from some infamous

rather a veritable etching in words-

Obscene, quick-trotting, see her tip and fade Through shadowy railings into a pit of shade!"

These two—that utterance and that descriptive gem—may, indeed, be taken as largely typifying both the matter and manner of Mr. Henley's poetical work. Throughout the volume we find the poet facing the mysteries of Life and of the great inevitable Death with a sturdy consciousness of the fact, which he states in two lines, that

"I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul."

But we find further an almost unique power of description, often exemplified in unusual rhythms with rare similes and illustrations, and yet conveying, with absolute certainty, a distinct impression of the scene which is often not so much described as forced bodily before one's mental vision. Take, for example, that wonderful realisation of a golden sunset seen from the crowded Strand. Who that has once read it could forget it? And who could afterwards witness a golden sunset from the Strand without seeing far more of its rich splendour than he would have done knowing nothing of this poem? In a preface to these collected poems, Mr. Henley explains why it is that his work of this nature is no fuller after a quarter of a century's writing. his wares unmarketable—if I may adapt Goldsmith's famous couplet—

"He, born for the universe, narrowed his views,

And to journalism gave what was meant for the Muse."

To me there seems something almost tragic in it, for, fully realising Mr. Henley's splendid achievement in criticism—his recent essay on Burns is a master-piece—and the inestimable service he has done to modern letters, in lighting upon and "bringing out" young men of talent, yet I cannot help pondering what might have been had circumstance (or a purblind public) allowed the poet fuller freedom to ex-

press himself. As it is, the various slight volumes which Mr. Henley has addressed to an audience fit, but few, form now when collected together a book of but two hundred and fifty uncrowded pages. therein is not of the same excellence, it must be confessed, some pieces in the "Bric-a-brac" section are not worthy companions of "In Hospital," of the wonderful "London Voluntaries," and other sections, but even the poetical tours-de-force of ballade and rondeau are marked by the writer's individuality of outlook, his notable freshness of phrasing. In reading the volume-much of which is new treasure to me-I cannot help thinking again and again of the poems of James Thomson, with his saddened views of life, but his strenuous courage in confronting the mysteries which send some people mad, but which the vast majority of unthinkers wisely (for them) ignore. Mr. Henley, however, is a greater and a more strikingly original poet than the unfortunate "B. V.," and the suggested similarity is, perhaps, owing at times to subjects and at times to certain likenesses in the writing. It would have been a pleasant task to have dealt more fully with much in this book, to have borrowed some passages from the wonderful unrhymed rhythms, to have instanced that poignant cry of bereaved fatherhood at the close; but other books call for comment at my hands, and I must lay aside (to take up, I hope, again and again in the future) this volume of rare poetry.



THE IDLERS' CLUB.

THE QUEST OF LAUGHTER.

BY I. ZANGWILL, BARRY PAIN, W. L. ALDEN, ALLEN UPWARD, ARTHUR H. LAWRENCE, ARNOLD GOLSWORTHY, EDWIN HAMILTON, AND THE HON. STUART ERSKINE.

I am pleased to have the opportunity of saying something L Zangwill serious from my old chair in the Idler's Club in praise of laughter. thinks these are hard times for From a hygienic point of view, laughter is an exhilarating animal humorists. function, and shakes up the whole system healthily. As a form of exercise, therefore, it is extremely valuable, especially for that small sedentary fraction of England which does not go in for sport or bicycling. The age is so full of gloomy problems that it is a pity the critics make such a dead set against the humorist. He has been all but driven out of the field, so that the greatest art is now to conceal humour. And then the critics turn round and ask why we have no humorist to-day. Are they trying to draw a new humorist as dogs draw a badger? It is true that the art of appealing only to the risorial muscles is not the highest, but in a world in which the purveying of beer or tea is rewarded with titles, the purveying of laughs should not be a criminal offence. Granting that the true humorist is he whose humour illumines his presentation of life, as a smile lies on a pensive face, and not he whose humour is like one of those indiarubber faces—an embodied grin, there is still a place even for the consistent clown. All forms of art proceed by selection and elimination. In many forms of art—especially the classical—it is the humorous that is eliminated, the humorous that persistently twines round all life. The man who hurries down in a hansom to imprint a last kiss on the lips of his dying sweetheart, is yet capable of thinking whether the cabman will swear if he gives him a shilling. But the novelist must leave all that out, or he will spoil the dignity of the situation. The tragic side is isolated and presented separately. The serious part poses as the whole. In revenge, the comic side must sometimes have its turn, must pose as the whole. The humours of cabmen, say, must be isolated from all the serious incidents with which cabs are connected, and must be presented by themselves. Even the cemetery has its comic side, and a bishop is a legitimate subject for wit. The comic is the soul's protest against, and escape from, the grimness of universal law. It was a deep-seated instinct that, made all religions allow breathing moments of blasphemy, like those strange Church Festivals of Merrie England, the Feast of Fools and the Feast of the Ass. And, if the laughter of fools is as the crackling of thorns under a pot, there is no greater fool than he who will not laugh at all. Let us welcome, therefore, not only the real humorist who is an April day of tears and smiles, but the specialised humorist, who, like "Mr. Punch," isolates the comic side of life and presents it detached from the totality of the real.

Talking of "Mr. Punch," I am reminded of a curious ethical question which occurred to me when a month or two ago I read a paragraph anent myself in his old-established columns. How far may a comic paper take advantage of its licence to jest? What forbids to tell the truth, jesting? is an old query, but is it equally permissible to tell a lie, jesting? I had said in an interview that a member of the "Punch" staff had told me that my poor dead "Ariel" was the only comic paper which the staff took seriously, and which they used to read so as to avoid repeating the jokes. "Mr. Punch" retorted, with surprising wit, that none of the staff had ever heard of "Ariel" till they saw it mentioned in the interview. I enjoyed the repartee myself, but had grave suspicions that many of "Mr. Punch's" readers would imagine that this was an official contradiction, and that I was a challenged liar. Now, had "Mr. Punch" the right to place such reliance on his readers' sense of humour? It is no laughing

matter.

"Quest" is a good and pretty word. I prefer its mediæval to its modern associations, but taken by itself it is good all through, looks well, sounds well, and is fairly easy to spell. But to speak of the "quest" of amusement, of humour, of laughter, is to say a

Barry Pain says those that seek it never find it.

Those that seek it never find it; give up looking for it, sit down in your chair, go on with your ordinary work, and the mischievous sprite reveals herself at once to you. She is everywhere. I have noticed, with pain, her presence in church; I have even met her, with horror and amazement, at a funeral. Only the comic papers have the mysterious secret of avoiding her. Even materials which at first appear unpromising have their yield of laughter. When we hear of the minor misfortunes or accidents which have happened to very dear friends we sympathise, as long as we can do so with a straight face, and then we run away to some place where we may laugh undetected. It is quite enough that a man should resemble your opinion of him for him to amuse you. A and B decide that C is a mean man. see C perform some little act of meanness. A and B look at each other, and their eyes twinkle, and they feel comfortable all over. When the mere fact of a man being himself is enough to amuse other men surely we need no adventurous search for amusement. It oozes out of the commonest experiences in life.

But there is amusement and amusement. There is the laughter and the smile. Laughter is a contagious nervous derangement, painful to hear and hideous to behold. If prolonged it may cause serious suffering to the laugher, so that he says openly that he fears he will die of it. More satisfactory, both from Lord Chesterfield's point of view and from others, is the smile, especially the secret, barely visible, deeply consolatory smile, and therefore, though since the world is full of the most ridiculous things we do not need to seek for amusement, we may exercise our discretion in our choice of amusement and procure it in the most pleasing and highly concentrated Such, for instance, is the amusement which one may obtain from observing an ill-supported dignity. Aggrieved vestrymen are for this reason generally worthy of attention; schoolmasters may also sometimes give us cheerful moments. A mayor is not a bad thing, especially if his mayoral trappings sit ill upon him. In this lies the true reason why bishops should not bicycle although their dress would seem to be specially adapted for the purpose. Pleasure may be found also in hearing definite and authoritative statements on art, literature, politics, the breeding of pigs, or the quest of amusement, so long as those remarks are made with great conviction of their truth and a strong sense of their importance by one who is not in any way qualified to speak on the subject at all.

And in this respect I have now done what I can.

By far the most irresistible of all humour is furnished by writers of exceptional dullness. The professional funny writer is never half so funny as the writer who is incapable, not merely of

W. L. Alden believes in unconscious

inventing, but even of perceiving a joke. If I were to be asked what is the most humorous book ever published, I should at once reply The Hermit of Aleova. I do not suppose there are fifty persons living who ever heard of this book. It was written and published in America about forty years ago by a solemn and illiterate ass, and its unconscious humour has never been even approached by any recognised humorist, American or English. I once owned a copy of this priceless treasure, and one night showed it to a friend, who sat up till daylight disturbing the rest of all the other inmates of the house by shrieks of delight. Once in the course of the night I was roused by mysterious knockings which accompanied these shrieks, and on getting up to investigate the cause, found that my friend was knocking his head against the wall in a vain effort to relieve his feelings. I presume a copy of the book might be had from some American dealer in second-hand books, provided a sufficiently large price were to be paid. It would be worth almost any price to the conductors of a comic paper; for if it were to be reprinted as a serial it would

make the fortune of the paper in which it should appear. Next to The Hermit of Aleova in unconscious humour I should rank a certain religious weekly, of wide circulation. Such a thing as an intentional joke never yet appeared in its chaste columns, but the solemn way in which it reproduces the theories of fifty years ago, and its blissful and unlimited ignorance of modern thought, are delicious. When I say that this remarkable paper believes that Darwinism is an atheistical theory held by a very few wicked men, who are mere pretenders to scientific knowledge, some faint idea of its peculiar humour may be obained. Were I to be appointed editor of a professedly comic paper I should surround myself with a staff of the dullest men in London, and employ half-a-dozen young and ardent proofreaders to correct the paragraphs of the dull men. The result of the unconscious humours of the writers, and the improvements added to it by the ambitious proofreaders, would be the funniest comic paper ever published. The reason why comic papers are as a rule depressing to the spirits is that they are written by premeditated The moment some enterprising man grasps the truth that unconscious humour is the best of all humour, we shall have a dull man's comic paper that will convulse the United Kingdom with laughter.

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Allen Upward follows on the same side.

True humour is only found in the deadly serious. The native home of humour is Scotland. Witty people are never humorous; the Irish are as devoid of humour as the Scotch are of wit.

same side.

In these days conscious humour has been expelled from literature. The comic papers are not comic, and cultured writers are humorous in spite of themselves. It is considered that humour is low, but this is a mistake. True humour is never low. There is nothing more truly humorous than a

bishop, and some earls are extremely laughable.

Formerly I used to go to farces in search of humour. I now go to Ibsen's plays. There is a mine of rich fun in Ibsen. You go to the theatre, and the curtain goes up, and a mother says she wishes her child were dead. Then somebody comes on and tells her the child & dead. That is the first act. Then the curtain goes up again, and two people sit and talk about it, while the mother prowls round in a rockery at the back, like a cat on the tiles. That is the second act. Then the curtain goes up again, and everybody talks it all over once more, ending by saying it can't be helped. That is the third act, and it concludes the play. It lacks incident, but if you can only enter

into the spirit of the thing it is exceedingly funny.

Next to Ibsen, the greatest field for humour is in melodrama. Melodrama is livelier than Ibsen, but Ibsen has no comic relief. That is why I prefer Ibsen to melodrama. But melodrama is sometimes very good. I once saw a play in the provinces about the Indian Mutiny, in which there was one scene that beat anything I ever heard of. There was a loaded cannon pointing at the tent in which the hero slumbered. Enter the villain, who applied a light to the touchhole. Enter from behind a tree the heroine, who realised the situation, and after the igniting of the touchhole, but before the emergence of the ball at the other end, twisted the cannon clean round on its carriage, so that the ball as it came out took the grinning villain in the abdomen and killed him, with the smoking match still in his hand. It was only the second act, so, of course, he came to life again and had to be killed several more times in the course of the play. But that wasn't the heroine's fault. She would have done for him with that cannon just the same in the fifth act, if she had been allowed. She was a smart girl, full of presence of mind, and always on the spot when wanted. I never came across a better heroine. I should like to have seen Mrs. P—tr—ck C—mpb—ll in the part.

I have an aunt living in the provinces, the widow of a clergyman, and occasionally I have the poor thing up to town for a short holiday, and take her round to entertainments that I think she can understand. The other day I took her to the Surrey Theatre to see a magnificent play called *True as Steel*. It cost 2s. to the

dress circle; and when I state that there were three villains who pursued their evil careers through no less than thirteen separate scenes, it will be admitted that

you got value for the money.

In the prologue the hero saved the wicked employer's life from the gun of the wicked trades-union agitator; in return for which the wicked employer stripped the roof off the hero's cottage, so that the real snowflakes came through on his dying wife and killed her on the spot, while the hero was arrested for murder. mere hors d'auvre to whet your appetite for what was to follow. In the play itself, the hero, who had of course escaped from penal servitude—a hero can always do that, but a villain can't: no villain was ever known to escape from penal servitude—the hero, I say, turned up as a diamond king and revealed himself to his daughter in the hearing of the wicked lover, concealed in the conservatory. The wicked lover, who was already married by English but not by Spanish law to a lovely Spaniard, thereupon gave her an appointment to come and be murdered at the old sluice house. The wicked lover is always luring his fair victims to places of this kind, and though they ought to know by this time what is in store for them, they go on coming as confidingly as ever. wicked lover opened a trap-door in the dark, and the fair Spaniard fell through it, amid the excited groans and hisses of the audience, which were changed into loud cheers when the scene shifted suddenly, and revealed the hero climbing out of the water on the mill-wheel with the victim still breathing in his arms.

Then there was an iron foundry, and the good young lover, who was the long-lost son of the wicked employer (now verging on bankruptcy), was put under a steam-hammer and pounded to the actual shrieks of the audience (a fact), till the hero, who was feigning to be deaf and dumb, suddenly dragged him away, but in doing so revealed his identity to the wicked trades-unionist. All parties now adjourned to a pit-shaft, where the hero got into a cage which conveniently went down when the police came to look for him, but came up in time to let him save his daughter from abduction. After which one of the villains shot the other, in mistake for the hero, and the third villain repented. Tableau, slow music and curtain.

I say that is humour; and if any syndicate approaches me properly, I am prepared to write a humorous play on those lines which will run for forty years. (ADVI.)

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Does anyone go in quest of laughter in these degenerate days? The rival quests of The Golden Girl and The Holy Grail are somewhat dull and serious matters, if I am able to judge. There is afraid to laugh. seems to be little mirth in the sex "problem" which way you look at it, and rampant sectarianism, the weaving of theological webbings, and the

construction of new creeds which have nothing to do with morals or religion, with this life or the next, seem eminently calculated to quench laughter, and to make the

Merry Jester look a poor fool indeed.

I have been told by thinking men and women—people who make a profession of serious thinking, and seem to flourish on it considerably—that, amongst others, Mark Twain, Max Adeler, and a certain mere beginner in literary enterprise, the late Mr. Charles Dickens, to wit, are quite vulgar, and that there is no virtue in them. The other day I expressed a rabidly contrary opinion to a Representative Thinker, and I shall not soon forget the way in which he said, "Well, I pity you!"

Sometimes one is tempted to ask—as far as "literature" goes—where is true humour to be found? In answer to this question it has been frequently impressed upon me that Max Beerbohm, George Bernard Shaw, and Frank Harris have made a corner in it, and that no other is genuine. I believe, also, that whether you laugh

at or with a man is a mere detail.

In the days of my childhood, when I had time to read books and to enjoy myself generally, I imagined—in the innocence of my poor childish heart—that laughter was something to be desired, and I really used to regard the humorist as a public benefactor. From such depths can one spring! During the last fifteen years,

however, matters have changed. The questers after laughter are apparently getting feebler and fewer, the "professional humorist," as he is sneeringly termed, is becoming extinct, and if one happens upon a survival, one is oppressed with the feeling that the time cannot be far distant when he will either blow out his brains or become a Member of Parliament,

No doubt there is a large public—a very large book-buying public—on the lookout for a humorist, but the literary critic and certain highly effective social influences are against him. The mere payment per thousand words system is not altogether encouraging, for if brevity is the soul of wit, it is also death to good business; and where are the editorial connoisseurs to be found who shall measure out and apprize

the precise value of witticism amd humour?

If I may claim any living writer as a true humorist I must also claim him as one of the world's heroes, for every man's hand is against him. To the lover of laughter it is rather a sad thing if present-day humour is to be left in the hands of the paltry satirist and the despicable punster, but I have no doubt that there is a good time coming when sermons, essays, and sanguinary stories shall not entirely engross the editorial and publishing community, and laughter will become almost fashionable again. Meantime, I propose to vie with the Vicar of Bray in the sense of not going in front of the times, or being too much behind them, and so I confess that when I laugh, I laugh secretly, and if at any time a giggle escapes me, I am wholly ashamed, and will try not to do it again.

When I was a young man, I foolishly entertained the notion Arnold that anything humorous was something that made you laugh; Golsworthy is but since I have grown up I have learned that anything which anxious to know what humour is. makes you laugh is mere vulgarity. And taking this point of view, I feel sure that no one can concientiously charge our leading humorous journals with being vulgar. It is pretty much the same with the term "comedy" in my experience. In my green and salad days I have paid good money away to see a "comedy," under the impression that I was about to sample some of the most bewildering fun that human ingenuity can invent. Instead of which I have found myself sitting uncomfortably before dismal scenes, with the big salt tears welling up into my eyes, and the people in front of me looking round with a cold, unsympathetic stare, as if to intimate that if I didn't leave off sniffing in that jerky way they would call for help and have me summarily dealt with.

It will be seen, therefore, that I am not a person with even a moderate idea of what humour is. In weaker moments I confess to having sometimes repeated a little story which appeared to me to be funny; but if I did not succeed in raising a laugh with it, I have always stolen silently away without committing violence of any kind. Many people, however, who assert that they are humorists (and I readily acknowledge the value of assertiveness in these days) scoff at this inapt method of attempting to make a fellow-creature's life brighter and more hopeful. They will tell a plain, unvarnished tale, without any sauce or trimmings, as it were, and having arrived at the dénouement will announce the fact by digging their victim violently in the ribs with the elbow or the nude hand. And while the victim is writhing in a doubled-up condition, desperately endeavouring to disentangle his lungs from his liver so that they may be use separately, the true humorist flatters himself that the distressing scene is an exhibition of really paralysing mirth. This, I am assured, is the secret of success in humour.

I hope it will not be assumed that I have temporarily abandoned the habitual sobriety of a lifetime if I venture the opinion that humour is a subjective rather than an objective phenomenon. This I know reads like something funny; but I hope, in any case, that it will be found to be, like the war scares in the daily Press, funny without being vulgar. If the test of humour is its faculty to amuse, then it must be judged not by itself, but by the effect it produces. That is to say, humour depends

for its success on the ability of people to appreciate it. A man may have a good story to tell, but if he constantly repeats it to people with no sense of humour it will never prove a source of amusement. The successful humorist, therefore, is not he with a droll story available for consumption, but he who can find a satisfactory consumer. I do not of course propose to indicate the kind of person who is least likely to have a sense of humour, because this is no time for the making of fresh enemies. The ordinary man will hear with equanimity that in your opinion his moral system is defective, and his religious professions a fraud; but if you venture to suggest that he has no sense of humour he will regard himself as the victim of a cruel and unmerited slander.

It is a tradition in the City that the greatest repository of humour is the Stock Exchange. (There is no occasion for alarm; I do not propose to quote any examples.) My experience in the City confirms my view that humour must be measured by its effect. I was talking recently to an elderly gentleman who has been engaged in the banking business for upwards of forty years. I asked him to tell me in confidence what was the funniest thing he had experienced during his City life. After thinking for a moment, the old gentleman leaned forward with twinkling eyes and said he remembered something wildly funny that had once come under his notice in that bank. A new junior clerk had been told to despatch a couple of letters to Australia, and he had sent them off with only a penny stamp on each. The old gentleman, shaking with laughter, laid his hand pathetically on my shoulder and positively assured me that that was the funniest thing he had ever heard of.

In order that the symptom known as laughter may be developed, the patient must be on good terms with the practitioner-and with Edwin Hamilton himself, especially the latter. One seldom gives way to audible is analytical. merriment when reading, because the sense of privilege or distinction is lacking; anybody may read the same book. But, when a joke is evolved in the course of conversation, the listener feels elated. He has heard something unknown to the world at large; he feels that he is relatively a person of some importance, and laughter supervenes. For a like reason pantomime "gag" is better received than the text, though the latter may be at times intrinsically superior. Dublin galleries always roar at "very like a whale" in Hamlet, doubtless because they regard the passage as "gag" and rejoice at being regaled with a rendering not commonly conceded. Another form of inward congratulation is an important factor in the success of a pantomime joke. The point which remains unseen for a second of time creates a louder laugh than that with which a more obvious witticism is greeted. If the laughter remain outstanding for a second and a half, or even for two seconds, so much the better; but beyond that it is not safe to go. Within these limits, what a laugh loses in spontaneity it gains in volume. This is because each member of the audience thinks himself clever by reason of his having solved a mystery, and self esteem prompts him to advertise his perspicacity. To one who has lived many years in an atmosphere of humour, the absence of fun may in itself be funny. For example, an intending borrower said to a possible lender: "Have you any money?" and the possible lender laughed. The normal enquirer would doubtless have veiled his query in some more or less obscure reference to bullion, bimetallism, exchequer, or finance, and thus the man who said exactly what he meant was eccentric, and, as such, Instances of laughter evoked by the absence of fun might be multiplied indefinitely. Here are a few examples: - Tourist to sexton of church, in the vaults of which bodies become tanned by natural agency: "We want to see the leather men." Patient, ushered into physician's consulting room: "Please make me well." Host to guest who has kept him up too late: "Please go away." Often the dullest remark of the evening excites most merriment, and will live and be repeated after the brilliant sayings have died and been forgotten. Rugged rock may be as welcome in an ornate garden as a cultivated spot in a region where rocks abound; but, at the same time, I should be slow to advise the intending humorist to rely for his fame solely, or even mainly, upon the exclusion of humour.

The Hon. Stuart Erskine thinks the quest for laughter a melancholy one. "Tell me where is Fancy bred," quoth the poet in the song, who, after giving a number of more or less frivolous and impertinent answers to his conundrum, leaves the matter very much undecided, if I mistake not.

melancholy one. The fact is, 'tis as difficult to trace Fancy to its original sources as it is to discover the sources of Laughter. Both are slippery entities. Both vary in their character and constituents according to the genius and humour of the person who attempts to define them. And never was it truer of anything than it is of

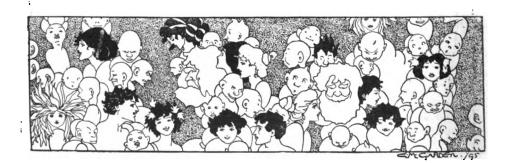
Laughter that what is one man's meat is another man's poison.

I apprehend that the man who sets forth professionally, as it were, on a quest of Laughter is like to have a very melancholy time of it; just as he who is in the habit of expecting much is apt to be egregiously disappointed. Undoubtedly, the best time to encounter objects designed for the purpose of provoking mirth is when we are not on the look out for them; for at such periods the mind, being relaxed, as it were, and taken off or disengaged from that melancholy which generally comes upon it in consequence of our endeavours to keep it amused, we, by being taken at a disadvantage, are much more likely to be entertained by them. But this observation is not designed to apply to the professionally Funny Man, whose melancholy antics must ever prove discouraging even to those temperaments that are most easily pleased.

Swift wrote an excellent treatise on a broom-stick, and 'tis even conceivable that a man of similar genius might evolve a diverting narrative out of a quest for Laughter. The broom-stick essay is very amusing reading, but I much doubt if any of our modern men of letters would be able to make their history near as entertaining. Indeed, the only modern author who, in my opinion, would be likely to do justice to so great a topic is Mr. Richard le Gallienne, whose recent quest of a Golden Girl has probably given him some sort of facility in the description of that kind of adventure. But Mr. le Gallienne is in America; besides, he labours under one great disadvantage, which is, that his

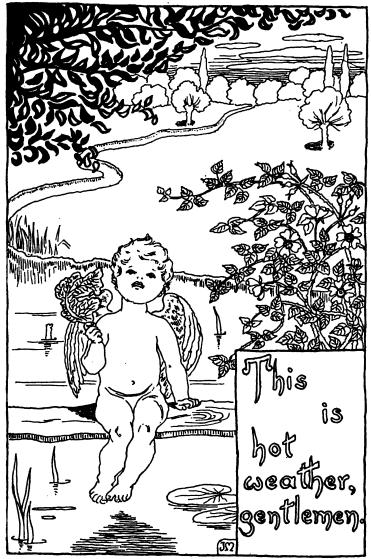
humour, if spontaneous, is generally unconscious.

For my own part, I am inclined to think that any quest of Laughter not personally conducted by the staff of THE IDLER is likely to be attended with the most melancholy results.





THE JDLER



June

IN THE GREAT ADMIRAL'S DAYS.

BY CHARLES KENNETT BURROW.

ILLUSTRATED BY T. H. ROBINSON.

IN TWO PARTS.-PART I.



was in mid-August of eighteen hundred and five (and blind hot it was, with not enough wind to stir the wheat) that I sat in

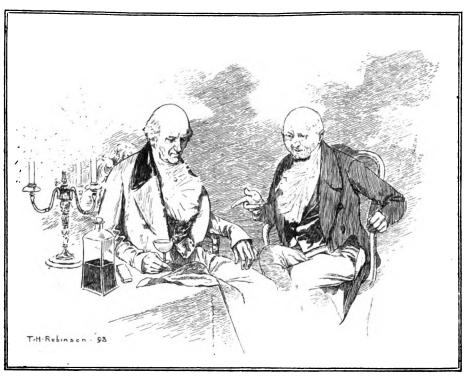
my father's study, at twilight, with a letter in my hand. I had read it a dozen times since morning, but the more I considered it the less I liked it; indeed, I was sorely troubled, not so much for myself, although that was bad enough, as for my dear friend and cousin, Gabriel Manton, at that time with Collingwood on the Royal Sovereign, watching the port of Cadiz as a terrier watches a rat. That you may the more clearly understand the cause of my disquiet I will write down the letter as it came to me.

"My dear Cousin," it ran, "we are set to watch this cursed place, and devilish slow it is, but we think there may be sharp work before long, and so grind our teeth and wait. When I say I wish I was with you in Churchsea you know it is not because I would run away from danger; I would give my eyes for a fight. But news has reached me, which I fear will put more work into your hands than you may care for, particularly as you like books better than blood. That villain cousin of mine, Frank Manton, is back in England from the Indies, where he had another name, thank God, so that when he thrashed black women to death it was not my name was cursed. It is certain that he

will go to Hillbury, and I think it likely he will try his devil's tricks with Esther. There was some understanding that he should have her between her father, Guy Dering, and his father, John Manton; but it was only a promise made when the old men had their heads nodding together over the wine, and when she was no more than a child of sixteen. As you know, dear cousin, Esther loves me. Therefore I give her into your keeping until we have trapped these French and Spanish rascals, and I am back in pleasant Churchsea again."

There were other matters in the letter, but I took no note of them; here was quite enough to make me feel like a landsman at sea.

From where I sat I could see across the marshes to Hillbury, where a few lights shone, and it pleased me to think that one of these, perhaps, lit Esther Dering's chamber, for where Esther was I knew Mary Pendril would be, and if my cousin Gabriel loved Esther, it was equally certain that I loved Mary. This fact, of which Gabriel knew nothing (I having only found out that I was in love some few weeks before) made my position all the more perplexing, for it bound me to be the guardian of two young women instead of one. They had lived together in the big house at Hillbury ever since Guy Dering's death, Esther being an only child and all his property falling to her. Mary Pendril came of a good Sussex family that had gone under in those uncertain times, and although I often told myself that I should not have loved her less had she been a labourer's daughter,



"When the old men had their heads nodding over the wine."

yet it pleased me to think the Pendril blood was as good as my own. Indeed, the Mantons, the Pendrils, and the Scardales (of which latter race I was at that period the youngest living representative) can hold up their heads with any, and have a clearer record than many more boastful families; but that does not concern the matter in hand.

I was sitting with the letter still in my fingers, feeling my position more sharply each moment, when my father came into the room. At another time, I think, I should hardly have chosen to give him my confidence—not that I in the least mistrusted him, but because, I suppose, the young like to nurse their love alone at first. He was a very quiet and careful man, so careful, indeed, that when the news of the threatened French invasion came, and it was reported that transports were ready at Dunkirk and Boulogne, he had all his silver carefully packed up and

prepared for sudden removal; which may, after all, have been only a wise precaution, as it was said that the French boats could be seen from Romney with a glass. But I confess I never had much fear, as many of our own ships continually swept up and down the Channel, and where they were the French seldom willingly came.

My father, then, entered, and as it was so dark that he could not see my face, I the more readily told him what Gabriel's letter contained and also of my love for Mary Pendril. He heard me to the end without a word, and then rang for lights before he spoke. When they had been brought and we were alone again, he eyed me up and down with so kind a smile that my heart leaped for pleasure.

"It is ill talking in the dark, Nat," he said, "though no doubt you had your reason. In these wild days love

seems out of place, and every man should be a soldier; but Mary Pendril is well enough, and as good to wed, perhaps, as a richer woman."

"That's what I was thinking," I said.

"There will be enough for both of you," he went on, "unless the French make hash of us." At that I sniffed scornfully, and threw out my hand as one does to scare a cat.

"Pooh," I said, "to the devil with the French!"

"Just so," he said, "and Amen, but we must think of possibilities, Nat."

"But that is not a possibility, sir." He shook his head at me, still smiling.

"You are young, my boy. Well, well, even I could fight, and you have a pretty way with a rapier. But the matter of that scoundrel Frank's return is more serious. I don't see where I can help you at present; you can only watch. I always thought it foolish of those two girls to live alone, with only servants in the house, as they do."

"They will not hear of leaving it," said I; and added, "I think I will walk over to see Mary to-night."

"It will be a good excuse," he laughed; "I see you snatch at opportunities."

"I will speak to her first, she has a better head than Esther."

"Of course," he said, "and I dare say you think a prettier face."

" No doubt of that," said I.

"Well, well, go, and take the child my blessing, and bid her come to me tomorrow to be kissed."

As I went out I grasped my father's hand for thanks, and he patted me very tenderly on the shoulder. I think, in his heart, he was deeply glad that I chose Mary Pendril, but it was not his way to say much on any matter.

As I went forth it was half-past nine by the great clock in the hall, and as I had half-an-hour's walk before me there was a chance that Mary would be in bed. But a tramp over the White Road under the stars always delighted me, I suppose it was in my blood to love the place; at any rate, I have sometimes been so lifted up in spirit there as to be unconscious of the earth under my feet, a creature to whom the night sang only of youth and love. But on this particular evening, although love was in my heart, there was some fear there also, and I found myself scrutinising sharply such passengers as I met upon the way. But none of them had any look of Frank Manton as I remembered him, and I reached my destination in rising spirits.

The house in which Esther and Mary lived was near the Church of Hillbury, and part of the garden wall bounded one side of the churchyard. In this wall was a narrow doorway, by which I usually entered, generally to find one of the girls busy about the flowers. To-night I made my way to it as usual. It was only latched, and as I passed through and closed it behind me, the thought that any other might do the same sent the blood rushing to my heart.

I turned up the broad pathway that led towards the back of the house, and presently saw a white figure pacing before me. I gave a low call, which I had used a hundred times before, and in a moment Mary Pendril had her arms about my neck.

"Oh, Nat!" she cried, "I thought you would not come!"

"Well, dear heart, kiss me for each minute I am late," said I, "and forgive me." I must have been very late indeed, to judge by the kisses she showered upon my lips. When she drew back I slipped my arm about her waist and we paced slowly together in the moonlight.

"Mary," said I, "promise me to have that door locked every night."

"Why?" she asked. "And how will you get in?"

"By the front door, which, when I come to think of it, is the proper way for a young man to come a-courting the sweetest girl alive."

She nestled to me. "Am I that?" she asked.

"A thousand times, yes," I said, "but we're getting away from the matter of the door. I want your promise." There was something in my voice that startled her, for she paused and looked questioningly into my face.

"Why must it be locked, Nat?"

"Because there is danger about us, and an open door is as free to a rogue as to an honest man." And I told her what my cousin had written, and that she must help me to guard Esther until he came. She listened silently until I had finished, except that she cried "Shame" when I spoke of Frank's brutality to women. With my last word she drew herself free from my arm, as though to show me I might trust her to stand alone when I was not by.

"If he comes here," she said, "he will have to deal with me."

"That is well spoken," said I, smiling to myself to hear her talk so proudly, "but we must remember that you are only a woman, sweetheart."

"And an honest woman is a match for a wicked man," she said.

"In purpose, no doubt, but not in strength and cunning. Women, my dear, are as God made them, and too often the best of them are prey to the blackest villainy. They are easy victims to a winning tongue."

"Like yours," she said, and carried my hand to her bosom.

"Like mine, if it pleases you to call it winning, little one. You see now why the door must be locked?"

"Yes," she said. "And it shall be done."

"And where is Esther, now?" I asked.

"In bed, and I warrant fast asleep."

"As you should be," I said. "What do you mean by loitering in the garden at this hour?"

"I thought that perhaps Mr. Nat

Scardale might come to see a lonely girl whom he pretends to love!"

"Whom he does love with all his strength!"

"Yes—yes, I know," she whispered, and lifted her face to mine. It was so fair, so pure, so tenderly sedate, so full of love, that I kissed her forehead with a kind of reverence, and my breath caught. She stamped her foot on the gravel. "You might have kissed my lips," she said.

"Well, and I will," said I, and did it. Then we stood looking into each other's eyes under the placid moon as though we were the only two alive in all the world.

"You must tell Esther about all this," I said. "But don't frighten her too much. You are her friend and can put it gently."

"Suppose this Mr. Manton comes to the house, what are we to do?"

"She had better see him, but not alone. Can you trust the servants?"

"I do not much like Hayes," she said.

"He may be honest; I may do him wrong, but I don't like him, Nat."

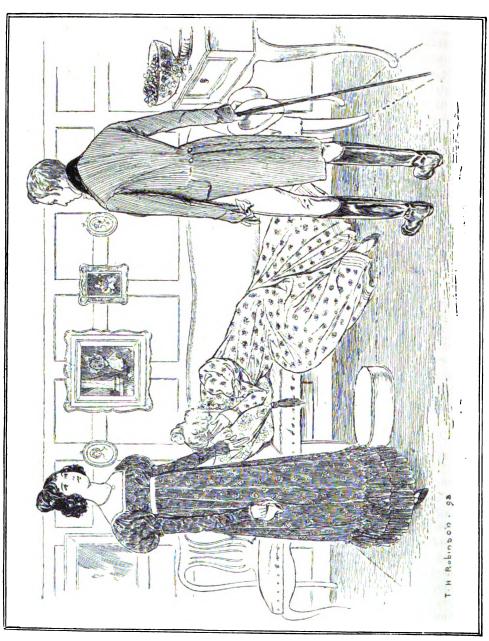
"Then watch Hayes," I said. "And if anything happens send to me at once by a trusty messenger. Now, good-night."

"You will come to-morrow?"

"I will come to take you to my father. I have told him everything, and he wishes to kiss you as his daughter."

She clapped her hands and hugged me. A moment later I was out of the door in the wall, and I heard Mary turn the key behind me.

The weight of suspicion being already heavy upon me, I glanced narrowly under the shadow of the wall to left and right and then across the church square, which shone under the open sky almost as clear as day. There was not a soul in sight; the shadows of leaves lay black and still upon the grass and flagstones; all the lights in the surrounding habitations were long since out; there was only brooding night about me and a wonderful silence.



To make sure, however, that all was so far safe, I went round to the front of the house, which faced a side street, and just as I turned to the left I was aware of the sound of a door being closed stealthily, and the gleam of a receding light. I pulled up instantly and waited. In a moment footsteps smote upon the side-walk, and I had hardly slipped under an archway to escape observation, when a man passed at the other side. It was impossible, in that uncertain light, to be sure of anything; but my quickened pulse assured me that the game had commenced. turned the corner I emerged from my hiding-place, and, guided by the sound of his tread, followed at a safe distance, keeping step with him. I expected, if this were my man, he would be lodging at the George, but instead of turning again to the right he went straight on down Eight-Bells Street. This put me out somewhat until he paused by a dark doorway at the end of the street. His low knock was answered instantly, and in the light that shone forth Frank Manton stood clear.

Now, in that house lived Owen Trale, a man of the most evil reputation in Hillbury, for he was not only a smuggler (a man may be that, as we know, and remain well-thought of), but also a common thief, and, report said, a highwayman on occasion as well. This, you may be sure, set me thinking more painfully than before, for not only had I learned that night that my cousin's enemy had returned, but also that he was in some evil correspondence with a man steeped in villainies, and furthermore that he was endeavouring to corrupt, if he had not already corrupted, the man Hayes. I confess that, for a moment, my head swam; but I shook myself free of this first weakness, and turned my steps towards Churchsea as the town clock chimed the quarter after eleven.

I found my father sitting up for me, which was not his custom. When I had

told him all that had occurred he looked very grave.

"This seems the beginning of a bad business, Nat," he said, sipping his hot Eau de Vie slowly; "the best point about it is what looks the worst. If Frank is in league with Trale, be sure he is up to some mischief other than this affair of Esther, and the King's officers may want him before long. I think they should hear of it."

"Wait," I said, "until we know more against him. He may be innocent." The old man shook his head.

"You are young and chivalrous, as you should be; I am old, and know of what bad men are capable. We shall see." It was fortunate for us all that my father was wiser than I.

When I awoke the following morning I felt years older; it even seemed to me that my body had toughened. My life hitherto had been so barren of startling events that to be thus thrust in the front of action changed my outlook upon the Before, in spite of the troubled condition of the country, it had been a matter of books, of dreams, of easy love-making; now, things were like to dance to a different tune, with treachery working in the dark, and, very possibly, spilled blood and the flash of swords. The new prospect pleased me, for, after all, it is a man's business to do and not to dream.

In honour of these changed conditions, and also because I was that day to bring Mary to see my father, I put on my best long blue coat, with a heavy collar of velvet, and under the coat I wore a silk vest, very fine with stiff embroidery; my gaiters matched the coat, and I thought they fitted me extremely well. To town eyes I might have presented a laughable figure enough, but yet I think youthful limbs look well in almost anything that does not hide them too much.

My father had some work for me to do in the morning—writing, I remember it

was, and very ill I believe I did it,—so that it was not until two o'clock that I reached Hillbury, and knocked at the front door of Miss Dering's house. Hayes opened to me, and it was clear that the man was uneasy. I believe if I had not entered without enquiry he would have told me that the ladies were not at home. I made my way at once to the room on the left of the hall, and entered without being announced: a pretty sight and sound of locked arms and weeping met me on the threshold.

"What is this?" I cried.

Mary, who was kneeling by Esther's side, with her friend's arms round her, rose and came to me with her face pale and an angry light smouldering in her eyes.

"He has been here," she said, and pointing to the weeping Esther, "see what he has done already."

I drew a chair to Miss Dering's side, and set another for Mary at my left hand. "Now," said I to Esther, "tell me what has happened. Remember I am your friend and guardian in this trouble, and must know all."

"I thank you, dear friend," said Esther, "Mary has told me how good you are."

"My goodness," said I, "is nothing to the point at present, but I desire to earn your thanks, so let me hear your story. What did this rogue Manton say?"

At that she fell to weeping again, and I had to leave Mary to comfort her, while I paced the room, inwardly cursing the proneness of women to tears; in that matter they have no discretion. As I passed the door in my perambulation the shifty face of Hayes rose before my memory, and I suddenly turned the handle and threw it wide. There the creature stood, bent double to set his ear to the keyhole, with his false hands clasped behind his back. I caught him by the collar, jerked him upright, and led him, trembling, to the other side of the hall.

"You're a pretty servant," I said, "to play these damned tricks. You deserve

to be horsewhipped and bundled out of doors."

"My dear mistress," said he, cringing, is in trouble, sir, and I am an old servant; and have a will to serve her."

"And you do it by listening at closed doors!"

"'Twas for her sake," he muttered, "for how am I to know her friends from enemies in these times?"

"Was it a friend or enemy with whom you talked last night?"

He winced, and drew away from me as a lie rose to his lips.

"I talked with no one, Mr. Scardale," he said. "On my soul, I didn't, God help me!" I looked at him for a moment, in doubt what to do. To have him turned off would be to transform him into a vindictive enemy, with a full knowledge of the house, and perhaps with another servant within it as an accomplice. allow him to remain might work upon his better feelings, if he had any. I suppose I should have bribed him heavily, but I could not bring myself to pay a man to be faithful to a family whose bread he had eaten for so many years. He took advantage of my hesitation to put in a word for himself.

"I was wrong, sir," he said, "and beg to be forgiven. I will not offend again."

"Until, I suppose, you are paid to do it," I said. I regretted the words directly they were spoken. They were a mistake in tactics, but I was young, and my hands itched to thrash the man. An ugly look came into his eyes; he fell back a step and bowed his head in sham humility.

"You are pleased to be unkind, sir," he said.

"Hayes," said I, "you are an old man, too old to take to successful treachery. For your own sake I advise you to be honest. We have mentioned no names this morning, and said nothing of a certain visitor, but I know all there is to know, be sure of that, and at a word the whole mine will be sprung." This told far

more than I had anticipated; he shivered visibly, and moistened his lips with his tongue.

"Now go," I continued, "and let there be no more keyhole work, or, by heaven, you shall pay dearly for it!" He bowed humbly once more, and slunk away, but I was conscious that he snarled under his breath like an old hound.

I listened until the sound of his footsteps was shut off by a closing door, and then returned to the ladies, a little flushed by my doubtful victory. Esther's eyes were dry again, but she still shook with gusty sobs. Mary stood by her, and I was proud to see how boldly she held herself and how strong she seemed. It was strange, I thought, that I should have chosen this girl, who was as firm as steel, while my cousin Gabriel, a born fighter, should have given his love to the pretty and sweet, but timorous and doubting, Esther.

"Now," I said, sitting down again, "tell me why Frank Manton came and what he said."

"Oh," cried Esther, "he came to say he loved me and had worked and waited for me all these years."

"Which is a lie," I said, "as we well know; and as to his work, I wonder the rascal dared speak of such devil's doings."

"I told him I loved Gabe and that we were betrothed; and then he said I was bound to him by my father's promise."

"Even supposing such a promise were made," I said, "you are not bound by it. Two old men may grow very foolish over their wine, as doubtless your father and his did, but no man has a right to dispose of his own flesh and blood like that, and no gentleman would speak of such a wicked promise to a girl who loved another."

"Do you think," Esther asked, "that my father was drunk when he said it?"

"Not a doubt of it," said I, cheerfully; "at least we will pay him the compliment to suppose he was not sober." "Tell Nat, dear, what he said next," whispered Mary.

"He swore and threatened, saying he would have me at any cost and that he didn't care two buttons for a score of Gabes. Oh, how my heart beats still! He was like a mad thing and tried to kiss me."

"Was she alone with him?" I asked, turning to Mary.

"Don't be angry with me, Nat," she said; "I was called away, and Hayes let him in."

"As I thought; 'twas all arranged between them. But I have given Hayes a lesson this morning that he may remember. Well, when he tried kissing what did you do?"

"I struck him, like that!" and she thrust forth her little hand with hardly enough force to have slain a butterfly.

"That was bravely done," said I, "and what happened next?"

"Then he went away."

"I see," I said, "that he left the marks of his dirty boots upon the carpet, which shows that he came in in a hurry. This is a serious matter, Esther; you must on no account see him again, either alone or with others. And as to that rascal Hayes, at first I thought it would be wiser to keep him, but now it's plain he must not sleep in the house another night."

"But he is an old, old servant," Esther pleaded, "and may have meant no harm."

"A man who means no harm does not have night interviews with infamous slave-dealers, and let them in alone to his mistress in the morning, and listen behind doors. He must go."

At that moment there was a knock at the door and Hayes himself came in. He was in mortal terror of some kind, and I jumped to the conclusion that my chance words about springing the mine must have touched him home; there was more, apparently, in the connection between Frank Manton and him than I

had thought. He stood there, bowing like a machine and trying to speak, we all three watching him; coward was written in every line of his body. At last he spoke, and, addressing Esther, said that he wished to resign his service and go at once, that he had been insulted by Mr. Scardale (at which I bowed), and that as soon as the money that was due to him was paid he would leave the house.

"You have no right," said I, "to claim a penny, and if your mistress will take my advice she will have your luggage searched before she lets you go."

But Esther would not hear of that, much to her sorrow later, when she found that her cherished christening cup had disappeared, with many other articles of value. She paid him his money, and he turned to go.

"Stay!" said I, "be good enough to deliver up the keys."

He handed them to me reluctantly; the man must have been a fool to think he could have got off with them. He made another movement to slip out, but I prevented him, and told Mary to count and examine the keys. I could not sufficiently admire the way my dear girl kept her head all through.

"The number is right," she said; "but this," holding one up, "will not unlock the little door under the balcony."

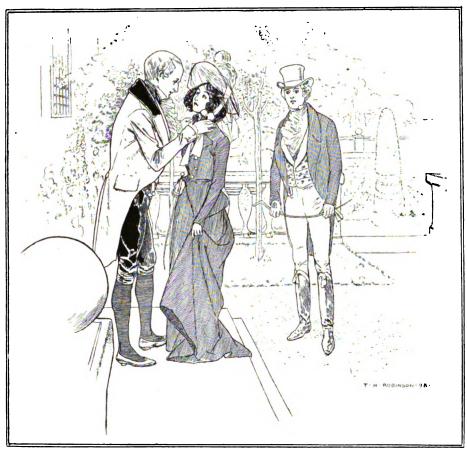
"Oh, ho," I cried; "so you have not learnt your lesson yet! Give it up, you rascal." He protested that he had not got it, and I had to clap my pistol to his head before he handed it over. Esther nearly fainted at the sight, but Mary never winked. I was almost sorry for the fellow; he was in such a deadly fright that the perspiration dripped from his forehead.

"Now go!" I said, and followed him from the room. He had a hand-cart ready at the door for his luggage, and a boy to wheel it; now I recognised the boy for a son of Owen Trale, and I have no doubt the old thief's spoils were gladly received by that spawn of Satan.

Having witnessed this strange departure, I returned once more to my charges, who seemed relieved to have seen the back of Haves. It was something, certainly; but when I sat down to consider matters, the immediate future presented a maze through which I could not see my way. always more trying to be on the defensive than to conduct an attack, as any soldier knows, and here we were, like a night encampment with the fires burning, open to a sudden and treacherous assault. I dare not even take Mary to see my father as I had promised, for though Esther had the best intentions in the world; at a hint of real danger I knew she would probably become impotent.

"My love," said I at last, "I will return now to Churchsea, and ride back with my man Howell. He shall stay here until the danger is over; you may trust him as you would Gabe or me. Then you can come to see my father and be back here before dark."

They agreed to this and thanked me, and in an hour I had brought my man and set forth again with Mary. The saddle had been changed and she rode Howell's horse; and I shall never forget that ride so long as any pulse beats in me. The fear I had for her gave a delicious, searching sweetness to my love, and my love was lifted higher by reason of the fear, so that I seemed like one moving between heaven and earth. The familiar road was transfigured by her who journeyed on it; Churchsea, before us, washed in sunlight and standing up into the deep blue of the sky, seemed a city of palaces; the level marshes spread their rich green for her delight. Her tenderness to me was so great that it held me speechless, except once when we paused and leaned together as by one instinct, and kissed; and then I only said, in a foolish lover's way, "My heart, you love me?" To which she answered, "My heart is full of you." that I could almost have wept, partly for joy, although I had heard it often before



He was waiting to receive us.

from her lips, and partly because I felt a man's unworthiness beside the purity of a perfect maidenhood.

When we reached my father's door, he was waiting to receive us. He led Mary in and welcomed her, and did her honour with such a sincerity and grace that he shone before me in a new light, and I thought my dead mother was happy to have had such a man for lover.

"My son," he said, "has chosen wisely, dear child. To look into your face is to wish myself young again," and he kissed first her hand and then her lips until she blushed for pleasure. He gave her, too, before the short visit was over (I did not like to keep her long from Esther) a collar

of pearls that had been my mother's, "To adorn a throat," he said, "not less beautiful than hers, which I would not say of any other woman living." I think Mary, for my sake, loved the compliment better than the gems.

I found, on taking Mary back to Hillbury that Howell had installed himself in the place of the outcast Hayes, and seemed already to have gained a good footing with the other servants. This relieved my mind of some uneasiness, for I knew the man to be devoted to my service, and of a wit quick enough to cope with any ordinary difficulty. So far, I flattered myself, things had not gone badly, and it was with a lightened heart that I went to bed that night.

I awoke at the first grey of dawn, and springing up, threw my window open and looked forth. A mist lay over the marsh, reaching some feet up the side of the hill on which Churchsea stood, but above the greater stars still shone clear. The air was wonderfully soft and inviting, and as I was always an early riser, I dressed and went out. No one was abroad at that hour, and this gave me a delightful feeling of possession, as though all Churchsea belonged to me; a feeling, surely, having great compensations for those whose love for a place greatly exceeds their real possessions in it. My thoughts naturally flew towards the neighbouring height that harboured my love, and in half an hour I was walking up the main street of Hillbury. A few stars still glinted, but every moment the light increased.

As I neared the George, I heard the sound of champing horses, and the hurry of departure. Stable-boys shouted, postilions swore, and all at once a voice I seemed to recognise rose in angry command. I drew nearer, the postilions leaped to their saddles, the chaise door closed with a bang, and the horses got into rapid motion. The windows of the chaise were down, and as it passed I caught a glimpse of Frank Manton, and, by his side, who but the faithless Hayes! I detected what I interpreted as fear upon both their faces, and there was certainly something in the manner of their going that suggested flight. This, added to Hayes' perturbation on the previous day, strengthened my belief that danger was anticipated by Frank from some other quarter.

The landlord was standing by the doorway, rubbing sleepy eyes in what appeared a very ill-humour, but my heart was so lifted up I would have spoken to the devil himself.

- "Good morning to you," I said. "Your guest leaves early."
- "And be damned to him," said he, "for a grumbling cur!"
 - "You seem upset. What has he done?"

- "First he must quarrel with my wine, which was too good for him, and then he must find fault with my bill; now, no man can stand that!"
 - "No, indeed," said I.
- "And then he cursed me for a lay-a-bed because the horses were ten minutes late.",
 - "He seemed in a hurry to be off."
- "The devil's own hurry, and on no better errand, I dare say."
 - "Do you know him?"
- "I must have seen him somewhere, the face was not quite strange."
 - "Ah," said I; "and where is he going?"
- "He said to London, Mr. Scardale, but as like as not he lied."
 - "Perhaps you are too hard upon him."
- "I don't like him, sir; and it seems to me," he added, "that you had better come in and take something to prevent a chill." There was no fear of that, it being quite warm, but I followed him into his little private room and we had a glass together.
- "Who was with him?" I asked. "I think I saw two faces in the carriage."
- "Old Hayes," he said, "on business for Miss Dering."
- "That, at any rate, was a lie," I said. He looked at me closely, smiled, checked himself in the middle of a wink, and drank.
- . "Look here, Boyton," said I, "we're old friends, aren't we?"
- "You're a Scardale, sir, and that's enough for me or any honest man."
- "Thanks," I said. "Now this is a matter that I don't much like; I have my reasons, but at present they must remain close." He nodded.
 - "I thought as much," he said.
- "Will you promise me that if you see anything of this man or Hayes again you will let me know at once?"
 - "I will," he said; "and within an hour."
- "In these days," I added, "all who are not the King's friends may be his enemies, and it's our duty as citizens to watch."

"He was not a Frenchy, sir," Boyton said.

"No, but are there no rascals in England?"

"I take you, sir," he said. "If he comes here again he shall be treated as a gentleman and watched like a thief."

"Now we understand each other," said I; "and I must be getting home to breakfast."

He saw me to the door, and stood there bowing as I passed up the street. I had been careful not to tell him too much, for, although I trusted him, it is always as well to hold something in the background; with small knowledge it is easy to remain honest; with great, only a strong man can keep his hands quite clean.

I went, as in duty bound, to look at the outside of the house where the girls were; I suppose both they and the servants were still asleep, for all the windows were shuttered, and not a whiff of smoke came from any of the chimneys. I said a prayer for their safe keeping as I stood on the side-walk, and then took the road to Churchsea with a light heart and step.

[TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH.]





FRA LIPPO LIPPI.

THE SEARCH FOR SELF.

BY EDWARD HUTTON.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALINARI, FLORENCE.



HE love and enthusiasm for antiquity that colours the age of the Renaissance for us, even to its close, was in reality a search for immortality. That dread of death, common even amongst ourselves in the very

young, the fear of entire forgetfulness, the dread of nothingness, was the soil out of which sprang the beautiful flower that we call the Renaissance. instead of looking forward to the future for that gift of life everlasting, we find the Florentines of that day peering longingly back at the past, certain that there at any rate was a sure immortality, and that in that wonderful culture of antiquity, divided from them by the gulf of darkness called the Middle Age, there was the secret of eternity, the power to confer upon Art a something which would not allow it to be utterly forgotten. It came to be a kind of creed, of almost passionate belief, that to be a scholar was the surest way to save something from the wreck of time; that learning was a salt which would crystallise their work, giving it endurance, an appeal to those coming after, that otherwise it would lack. Art in those early days was looked upon as something divine, and the artist as only a little lower than the angels perhaps, a true son of God in whom He was well pleased. An example of

this disposition of the people toward the artist may be noted in that wonderful reception—it is almost a triumph—which Cimabue received when his Madonna was borne in procession through the streets of Florence to its home in Santa Maria Novella. Even the Church took part in the welcome, as though in reality Mary Madonna had graciously come to them and they had found her a home right in their midst, as near as possible to their own dwellings.

In this age of extremes, then, we shall not be surprised to find great loves and great hates, great virtue and great vice; it was an age of enthusiasm, and it did nothing small. When Art was received with so much reverence even by the people, when its power to move seems to have been so potent, it is not surprising to find the artist passionate in his work, and, feeling the divine spark in him, seeking his own especial medium wherein he may, as it were, sing the new song that is in him.

For the artist, to find the medium through which he may express himself has ever been the great need, coming in later times, indeed, almost to be an end in itself. To come upon it early, to know that one is doing the best with oneself that can be done, is the prize of the few, and they generally the greatest of all Most, after much toil, many fruitless pilgrimages, many inventions, find their medium late, perhaps too late, and, looking back on the flowers they have plucked by the way, are content even to leave their



"The Nativity."

own true work undone, thinking, after all, on the pleasantness of the way thither. But there are left those who never find it, men sometimes of a real genius, an exquisite talent shown, it is true, in all that they do, but lacking the means to express the true inspiration, the very soul It is of such an one I have of the artist. tried to write, telling you in the simplest way I can of his life and his work. He was a great painter, but he was always above his work, always with the real soul lest over, finding at last his true expression, not in his own work, nor even in himself, but in the work of his most famous pupil. His own genius would find a voice, if not in a noble, then in an ignoble passion; if not in art, then in life. It is in this way and because of his failure, or near failure, to grasp the secret of his own work that his name is not over the great constellation of artists that now bears that of another.

About the year 1412 was born in a little mediæval street—called Ardigitione—in Florence, Filippo di Tommaso Lippi, called Fra Lippo Lippi. His mother, poor soul, died in giving him life, and his father, burdened maybe with sorrow, lived only till Lippo was two years old. Frail from his birth, beginning life without a mother's unreplaceable care, we find him



Madonna enthroned with Saints.

shortly in the convent of the Carmelites, just outside whose walls he had begun his life. The monks, having forsaken fatherhood, yet yielding to the instinct of nature towards that which is helpless, seem to have taken good care of him, bringing him up in the offices of the Church, and striving to teach a mind always almost unteachable. For we find him no lover of books, no scholar, but a dreamer of dreams in bright colours, and dexterous and ingenious with his hands so long as his thoughts are allowed to wander on that lifelong search of his. And so, while still very young, with the

approval of the wondering monks, he, almost untaught, paints a picture in terra verde in the cloisters of their convent, a picture to please his fathers, the subject being a Pope confirming the Rule of the Carmelites. They praised him, for did they not love him, they who had rescued him from death almost on his arrival in this world of which they knew so little? And so at the age of seventeen he thinks he wishes to be a painter, and without a thought throws off the clerical habit.

He was ever a dreamer of dreams, and even in his own time his dreams came to be a part of his actual life. Legends, stories, grew up regarding him that seem under the search-light of modern criticism to have had little reality in fact. It is said he is out in a boat one day, thinking, thinking, when he is made prisoner by Moorish pirates and taken a captive to Barbary, whence he is only returned after eighteen months, when they discover he can draw, and, so the Florentine legend runs, for this they take him to be a god. He is landed at Naples on his return, where he paints a picture for King Alfonso, which is placed in his private chapel. But he is still undecided. In truth, all this legend is but an allegory of his lifelong search for his own medium. Discontented, out of humour with this art, he longs for Florence, and at length returns there; and arrived, paints a picture for the nuns of Sant' Ambrogio, which is now in the Aca-

demy of Fine Arts in Florence.

It was the age of Lorenzo Ghiberti and Donatello, the age therefore of the great schism in art which has lasted ever since



Saint Anthony.

-the division between the Naturalists and the Mystics. How to choose? It does not trouble Filippo for an instant; he who had travelled and loved the world. even to the desertion of that quiet cloistral home, is a Naturalist already. His angels, even in the work he has already done, are boisterous boys, not angels at all really, yet fulfilling the requirements of even the most exacting devotee in a certain humanism. a certain delight in the mere living, the sensuous side of worship which is far indeed from coarseness, and farther still from that Middle Age, just gone by for ever, the Age of Asceticism.

This picture of his in Sant' Ambrogio made him known to Cosimo de Medici, who became his friend and protector. So he painted a picture of the Nativity of Christ for the wife of Cosimo de Me-

dici, and, recalling perhaps the circumstances of his own birth, gives an unwonted faintness—at any rate for him—to the expression of the Madonna—a wish,

as it were, not to live; a desire for quiet, as though she were thinking of the "lowliness of His handmaiden."

The lust of the eye, the desire of life, the power latent in all art to enjoy itself—it was in these that Filippo came almost to believe he had found his medium, and when engaged in the feverish search he has time for nothing else, has thoughts for nothing else. Cosimo de Medici wishes him to finish some paintings he is engaged on for the Palace, but Lippo is up and down Florence with no thought for work; that terrible desire of life in him eating his very soul away in its hunger, its desire to be appeased. So Cosimo shut him in—a kindly act, at any rate hethought sothat he might not waste time, so precious to Florence, to Italy, perhaps to the world. But Lippo, insatiable of life, of



Saint John Baptist.

that dear irresponsible going to and fro, cannot endure confinement for longer than two days; so, making a rope of the sheetings of his bed, he slips down again to the sun and shade, the dust and bustle, the roses and love of that Florence of which he could never tire. Cosimo is disturbed, distracted at his absence, terrified for his safety, and on his return at last, seeing that Filippo must have his way, promises to shut him in no more, endeavouring ever after by kindness alone to keep him at work, which for his own sake he must, so it seems to Cosimo, finish.

But now he has sent work to Rome, he is known in Padua, Cardinal Barbo, patron of the Arts, has commended his grace, and some distant relations at length hold out welcoming arms to him from Thither he Prato. journeys, staying ior months, together with Fra Diamente, a friend of his youth from the convent in Florence. The nuns of Santa Margherita-he seems to have exercised always a

curious fascination over women—commission him to paint a Madonna for the high altar of their church. And so, by chance as it were, and slow stages, as he would have thought, he comes to what I believe to have been the crisis of his life: the desire of life—the lust of the eye triumphing completely at last.

In the cool church on sunny mornings, or perhaps in aimless wanderings, still in search of that which ever evades him, he has seen Lucrezia Buti, a nun of some curious fascinating beauty that holds him as in a vice. And Naturalist as he is, with no thought beyond, behind his picture, he begs her as model for his Madonna. Persuasive, eloquent, graceful, he is not denied. He paints her, and while at work suddenly finds himself, for the first time in his life perhaps, really in love. From desire to accomplishment was a matter of mere wishing in most things with Filippo. We see that in the ease with which he accomplished that earliest picture for the Carmelites in Florence, almost without any teaching. Lucrezia is easily persuaded, and on a certain day when they had gone forth to do honour to a relic—the girdle presented to St. Thomas by Our Lady—he bears her from their keep. Disgrace falls where it is ill deserved, on the Nuns of Santa Margherita, and the father of Lucrezia, perhaps justly angry at the seduction of his daughter, in vain makes every effort to recover her, and in the end is supposed to have caused Lippo's death by poison. It was the outcome of this romantic union, their only son, Filippino Lippi, who carried on to some extent the tradition of his father's work, becoming though in a different style, "a most excellent and famous painter," as Vasari says. Poor as he always had been and was, theirs must have been a curious existence. Outlawed, at any rate for a time, by the Church, with no friend but Cosimo de Medici, Filippo needed then all that Lucrezia could give of love and sympathy in order to justify even to himself the wild act he had been so certain would mean happiness.

Pictures of his about this period are

not rare; for Cosimo seems to have exercised his influence and arranged matters with the Church. So we find him painting in the Augustine church of Santo Spirito in Florence; and in Prato, too, in the church of San Domenico there still remains a Nativity by him. His drapery is always fine (see plate 3) and his monks are full of some true spirit of devotion that is wanting in many a greater master. But it is in his Bambinos and in his boy angels that, in so far as he found expression in painting, he expresses himself. They are above all else natural-boisterous children from the streets of Florence, with something humorous in the bent heads and lips that should be murmuring Aves. In his picture of the Martyrdom of St. Stephen he has depicted brutal fury and lust for blood with an extraordinary power. Always vivid, there is something demoniac in the cruelty, the grinding teeth, and stretched lips of the mob that stones the Saint. His Madonnas seem to me to be only half realised. It was a later hand that found expression for all that Filippo had dreamed; for among his pupils we find him who was to supplant him, to say all or nearly all that Filippo has said and much more that Filippo had never dreamed of. I mean Sandro Botticelli.

Sandro was his pupil, and certainly no small measure of Filippo's unexpressed genius fell to his share. But Botticelli was a man who needed no helping introductions, a man well able to stand alone. Still I think we can trace Lippo's influence in some of Botticelli's early work, and especially in the hair and heads of his Madonnas.

Fra Filippo died in his fifty-eighth year, in the year 1469.

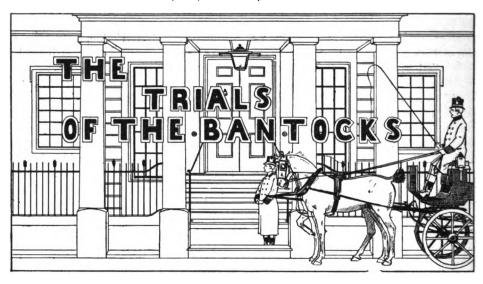
To Fra Diamente, with whom he had taken that eventful journey to Prato, he left his only son Filippino, then ten years old. And in due time Filippino goes to school to Sandro Botticelli, and when he

is older learns from those careful lips the life of his father.

So died Filippo the painter, a man of immense genius, wandering through this world trying to find the medium through which to express himself. He never succeeded, and he died greater than his work. Some compensation for a life set with pitfalls and sorrow from birth, we may believe he found some truth after all, perhaps, though meagre at best, in the old proverb, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." A Naturalist by

inspiration and conviction, a dreamer, a poet, in a way that is not elaborately artistic but close to life, he was not a great painter, but a great artist. A man of curious fascination, a man of his own time; for out of that age of enthusiasm, of extremes, there would have been no place for Lippo Lippi. Lucky in this, that he did not die without having known what life meant, what love meant, a thing, a questioning, in the search for the answer to which he was so earnest.





BY G. S. STREET.

ILLUSTRATED BY MALCOLM PATTERSON.

II.—THE DREADFUL GOVERNESS.

HERE is no one in the world towards whom I have a more humble feeling of reverence, I had almost said of self-abasement, than I have towards Mrs. Bantock. This is, I hope, chiefly due to my appreciation of her extraordinary excellence. I have known her for twelve years, and, so far as my observation extends, she has never done anything wrong, anything in the slightest degree to be cen-Her history, so far as I know it, is a calm succession of admirable incidents. a history surely to be far more warmly admired than those exciting and tumultuous lives of which we sometimes hear.

Mrs. Bantock was the daughter of a wealthy but not ennobled brewer, and in her youth she had all the advantages which a dignified home and the most accomplished governesses and masters can give. I have no doubt that she possesses all the accomplishments, intellectual and artistic, which are suitable to a lady, though of course at her age and in her position there are few occasions for their exercise. I have never known her at the loss for an opinion on any social, political, or literary question, even in regard to matters which her many

occupations have prevented her investigating, and her opinion may be always accepted as final—for my part, I never dream of disputing it. She married Mr. Bantock when she was twenty-five years old, bringing him a fortune of five thousand a year, and has been a devoted wife to him, so that he has never had recourse to those anti-domestic relaxations such as gambling and going to the less respectable places of amusement in which even middle-aged men and men of position are sometimes known unhappily to indulge. She has been an excellent mother; her sons have gone to the best schools and colleges, and her daughters have had the best and most carefully selected governesses. servants and dependents she is a friend; not, indeed, committing the false kindness of overlooking faults, but being always ready to assist them with wise counsel. She is most charitable, being on the list of vice-presidents of many excellent institutions, some of them patronised by royalty But I should weary you, though not myself, if I recounted all her virtues. In a word, she is a well-nigh perfect woman.

In my first acquaintance with her I experienced a feeling of timidity which has never quite worn off. It may have been (I hope it was) partly due to the unconscious recognition that she was a being superior to myself. But it was without doubt largely due to the majesty of her appearance. Mrs. Bantock was tall, somewhat stout, and extremely dignified in her

carriage. In the vears since I first met her she has become stouter, and that has added to her dignity. was, I have heard, a beautiful girl; in her middle-age she is handsome, and her features express the-so well employed — habit of authority. Certainly I was once afraid of her in spite of her kindness; I hesitated to venture a remark in her presence, and was con-

fused when she addressed me. To this day, when she holds out her hand to me I feel presumptuous in shaking it; I feel that it would be more seemly were I to kneel and touch it with my forehead or something of that kind. I admit that she patronises me; I would not have it otherwise; it would seem altogether wrong that Mrs. Bantock should address me as an equal. There are many people by whom a plain man must expect to be patronised in modern England, such as novices in aristocratic society, Stock Exchange lews, and the lesser lights of the stage, and I confess that such people sometimes irritate me. But when Mrs. Bantock patronises me I am merely grateful.

In fact, my only complaint in this matter (not that I do complain) is that Mrs. Bantock is too kind in noticing me. She will sometimes catch my eye at a small dinner-party at her house and drag me out of a preferred obscurity to ask, "Are you working hard?" My reply is inaudible, and she adds, "When you publish another book you must send it to me." (She is very kind in this particular, not only accepting my books, but even asking me for additional copies to give away.) I



Leant forward in quite an excited way.

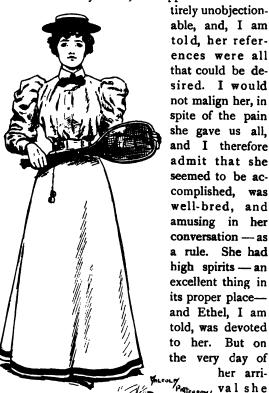
murmur how glad I shall be to do so, but by this time she is talking to somebody else, and I sink relieved into obscurity again. Such notice embarrasses me. But her kindness is usually most tactful, and, especially, it often takes the form of allowing me to be of service to her in a humble way; she knows, no doubt, what gratification such service is to me. Thus

I sometimes receive a postcard in the morning telling me to get her tickets at some theatre. Now this is really kind, because, of course, a footman could get them quite as effectually as I; but Mrs. Bantock knows that I have tried to write for the stage and am therefore interested in it, and knows also that I am at a loss how to employ my time in the morning. She has promised, by the way, that if ever a play of mine is produced, she will accept a box on the first night.

I could mention innumerable examples of such kindness, but I must hasten, in fulfilment of my promise, to relate an instance of how even such a woman may be tried, with its beautiful moral lesson of how we should bear affliction.

I was staying with the Bantocks in the country, when there arrived a new governess

for Ethel, a girl of thirteen. This was Miss Clavering. She was a young woman of twenty or so; her appearance was en-



Miss Clavering was giving Ethel a lesson in lawn-tennis.

argued with Mrs. Bantock at lunch.

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It happened that the conversation turned on Thackeray-Tom Bantock was reading The Newcomes as a holiday taskand Mrs. Bantock observed that he was too cynical. Whereupon Miss Clavering leant forward in quite an excited way and said: "Oh, do you think so? It always seemed to me he was too sentimental." Mrs. Bantock has a wonderfully agreeable temper; she merely said, with dignity: "It has always been understood that he was a cynic." That surely ought to have closed the discussion, but Miss Clavering went on: "But don't you think that what has been always understood is often wrong?"—a pretty sentiment for a governess! As in the case of Merryweather, we all looked at Miss Clavering, and it was equally useless. Mrs. Bantock, of course, ignored her question. But the unfortunate young woman began to give instances of Thackeray's sentimentalism, and appealed for confirmation to me, thus placing me in a very awkward position. Bantock at once turned to me. agree that Thackeray was a cynic?" she Then, of course, I could hesitate no longer, and agreed cordially. That ended the discussion, though Miss Clavering looked quite contemptuously at me-a most unwarrantable proceeding.

It is my experience of life that when Thackeray and his cynicism have been mentioned, Dickens and his vulgarity are never far off, and, sure enough, at afternoon tea they made their appearance. Once more Mrs. Bantock and Miss Clavering were in collision, the latter taking up the position that to describe vulgar people is not in itself vulgar. This time I voluntarily went to Mrs. Bantock's assistance. My argument, I admit, was sophistical, but I think the circumstances justified it, and Mrs. Bantock rewarded me with a smile. When Miss Clavering had left the room Mrs. Bantock expressed an inclination to tell her that it would be more comfortable for her to dine in the schoolroom, but Mr. Bantock, to my surprise, interposed, and we expected dinner with sinking hearts.

It was quite terrible. The conversation turned on the stage, and Mrs. Bantock said how glad she was that Ibsen was over. In her opinion, she added, he ought never to have been allowed. Immediately Miss Clavering began to argue. This time, however, she hedged—which was cowardly I thought. "Of course," she said, "I don't admire everything he has written, but it seems to me impossible to deny that he's a great dramatist." Mr. Bantock, who treated Miss Clavering throughout with great good-humour, contented himself

with remarking that she would think differently when she was older; but Mrs. Bantock, I could see, was extremely annoyed. It so happened that in talking apart to Miss Clavering before dinner I had agreed with her on this very point, and the dreadful girl at once drew me under My respect for the Bantocksalmost my sense of duty-impelled me to deny what I had before affirmed, but somehow I had not the nerve to do so, and I echoed Miss Clavering's opinion, though I am thankful to say she must have found me a very feeble ally. Mrs. Bantock stared at me, and I literally trembled, spilling some salt. Mr. Bantock said he had thought that I was too sensible for that sort of nonsense; he showed me none of the tolerance he had shown the ringleader in the disturbance. When we said good-night, Mrs. Bantock did not smile.

I tossed on my pillow all night, and felt wretched and very nervous the next day at lunch, when for the first time I met Mrs. Bantock and our persecutor again. Mrs. Bantock made me ashamed of my trepidation; so noble was the calm fortitude displayed. She addressed a remark or two to me, for which I was inexpressibly thankful. She was, however, most rightly cold towards Miss Clavering, merely replying "Indeed" when spoken to by that irrepressible young woman, who for her part showed no contrition whatever, but chatted gaily the whole time, chiefly to Mr. Bantock. But lunch passed without an argument, and we looked forward to the rest of the day with cheerful hearts. We little knew what was to happen that very afternoon.

It is impossible for a sane imagination to conceive of Mrs. Bantock in any ridiculous position whatever, but more especially in one physically ridiculous. Even a position in which people differently constituted would not be ridiculous, but which, owing to her stateliness and imposing presence, would make Mrs. Ban-

tock appear less dignified than usual, is quite unimaginable of her by a normal mind. Some of the most terrible nightmares I have ever had have been those in which (my nerves, doubtless, being morbid from overwork) I have dreamed of Mrs. Bantock scrambling up a precipice, or even (horrible to relate!) swimming in the sea, though of course properly attired. Awake, and in my right mind, I



Ran up to Mrs. Bantock apologising.

cannot see such distressing visions—except when I remember that terrible afternoon. Miss Clavering was giving Ethel a lesson in lawn-tennis, when Mr. and Mrs. Bantock walked slowly past the

court behind Ethel and in front of Miss Clavering. Russell Bantock and I were sitting on a bank near. Anybody but Miss Clavering would have stopped; she called out in a cheerful voice: "Please don't come so near, I'm teaching her to take them off the end crease, and I'm afraid of hitting you!" The next minute it had happened. A ball, hit by Miss Clavering, came full at Mrs. Bantock; she saw it coming, and, to avoid it, had to duck her head and run for several I started to my feet, but on reflection thought silent sympathy the better course and sat down again. Miss Clavering ran up to Mrs. Bantock apologising, as well she might. Mrs. Bantock walked silently to the house. You will hardly believe me when I tell you that after a minute or two Miss Clavering went calmly on with her game.

I saw Mrs. Bantock later in the afternoon, and she confessed that her nerves had been much shaken, but assured me, on my anxious enquiries, that she felt recovered. And the heroic woman appeared at dinner as though nothing had One would have thought that now at length Miss Clavering would be subdued. Not at all! She argued again, this time disagreeing with Mrs. Bantock's opinion of the growing want of respect shown to their natural superiors by the lower orders. Miss Clavering said they could not be expected to admit that everybody who happened to be rich was their natural superior. I was more on my guard that evening, and came to Mrs. Bantock's assistance with such success that I am glad to say she smiled quite kindly at me. But the strain was telling on us all.

However, it was not to last long. The next day Mrs. Bantock declared that her digestion was upset by Miss Clavering's unaccountable proceedings; and Mr. Bantock, knowing the terrible consequences of such a calamity (which even impaired Mrs. Bantock's usually perfect temper), agreed that Miss Clavering must go, and on the fourth day from her arrival she went.

I have tried to forgive her, and think I have succeeded, even to the extent of forgiving the cruel remark I heard she had made since of me-that I was "a cowardly parasite." But Mrs. Bantock's forgiveness seemed to come without an effort. A very few days afterwards she began to joke in her inimitably witty manner about Miss Clavering. "My dear," she said to a friend, her neighbour, Mrs. Lupin, "she contradicted everything I said, and nearly killed me with a lawntennis ball." And when, about a year later, we heard that Miss Clavering was engaged to be married to a young baronet whose sister she had been teaching, Mrs. Bantock wrote her a charming letter of congratulation, and I believe will be quite willing to go to her wedding. Such is the charity possible to a perfect woman!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]





Haussa lines in construction

(The white man is Captain Irvine, who was left in command at Wa.-May IDLER, \$. 494.)

WEST AFRICA AND THE EMPIRE:*

BEING A NARRATIVE OF A RECENT JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION THROUGH THE GOLD COAST HINTERLAND.

BY LIEUT. F. B. HENDERSON, R.N., D.S.O.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR.

III.—THE DEFENCE OF DAWKITA.—CAPTURE AND ESCAPE.

N the 2nd of March, 1897, I started for Dawkita, accompanied by Mr. Ferguson and Native Officer Geinalah, in command of an escort of forty Haussas, leaving Wa under command of Captain Irvine.

On the following day at noon I reached the steep wooded banks of the river Volta at what is called the Tangbela Ford, and crossed the river, which is here one hundred yards wide, without difficulty.

On the farther bank I was met by a number of refugees from Bona, under Angai Massa—in my ignorance I thought the word Massa ought to come first. He told me that the Sofas had asked for lodgings in the town, the Prince having sworn on the Koran that they would do no harm; but having been accommodated had picked a quarrel, and ended by killing the King and a large number of people. Lobi is a dependency of Bona, and it

was here that the fugitives had taken refuge.

I was informed that the Sofas were attacking Gaguli in the north of Lobi, and then intended to march through the country and attack Wa, as the King of the place was said to be guilty of a breach of contract in not having paid up 5,000 slaves due to the Sofas for "services rendered" at Sankana.

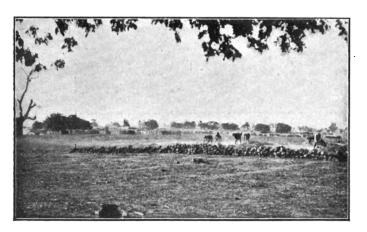
I reached Dawkita, which is thirty miles north of Bona, on the following afternoon, and was well received by a number of Lobi chiefs, who expressed hopes that I would put things to rights, so that a "man might travel through the length and breadth of the land without carrying his bow and arrows."

The said arrows are poisoned, and each man carries an antidote in a small horn in the shape of a thick black paste. Many of them carry other horns full of gold-dust,

^{*} Continued from page 497.

which seems to be plentiful. My next intelligence of the Sofas was that they had returned to Bona, probably thinking that I was coming thither from Wa.

The Bonas now proceeded to appoint a new King, who was solemnly installed by



Building a British fort at Wa.

being put on the "Skin of Bona." This was Angai Massa, the heir apparent, the succession resting in the representative of one of the three royal families in turn. He then changed his name, and was henceforth known as Kampa. Deputations of Lobis continued to arrive from all parts of the country, on whom I impressed the necessity of combining to resist a possible attack from the Sofas. "L'union fait la force," is certainly not the motto of the Lobis, to whom I expounded, unfortunately in vain, Æsop's old fable of the bundle of sticks.

I told them I had come to protect them, and did not expect the Sofas would attack me; but they gave me to understand that in that eventuality I might count on their assistance in thousands. They stated that they had before this beaten off the Sofas, who had a holy horror of their poisoned arrows and night attacks.

I sent a message to Samory, telling him what countries in the Hinterland were

under our protection, and consequently must be left unmolested. I received in reply a threatening letter telling me that all the Hinterland belonged to Samory, and that if I wished to be killed I had better stay at Dawkita, that there was no

food at Bona, and that he must get it from Lobi. He evidently seemed consider me as being the aggressor by coming between him and his neighbour's larder, and used curious metaphors. comparing himself to a snake that was molested, and to a wife beaten by a husband, who would catch hold of him in self-defence.

I understood from my messenger and from various fugitives that the Sofas were short of ammunition, and consequently did not expect an attack.

I made preparations, however, by provisioning and preparing for defence by making loopholes, &c., in three of the native compounds. These are large square buildings with walls about ten feet high and only one narrow entrance. The rooms inside have flat roofs about seven feet high, thus leaving a parapet of nearly three feet to protect the defenders on the roof.

For about ten days all was quiet, and then I heard that a detachment of Sofas was at Danwa, about seven miles distant, a place which I intended to occupy so soon as my reinforcement arrived. This was a force of fifty men, with two seven-pounders and two rocket-troughs, under Captains Cramer and Haslewood, which I had reason to expect daily.

At four a.m. on March 29th Mr. Ferguson awoke me with the news that our



(The King is scaled in the middle with a chain about his neck. Lieut, Henderrow's account of his stay at Dasima will be sound in the May Idean, p. 433.) A British ally. The King of Dasima surrounded by his principal courtiers.



The King of Leo at Palaver.

(The King is distinguished by a white robe, whilst on his left is seated a brother of Amrahia, the chief of banditti.— May Iller, p. 493.)

scouts reported that the whole Sofa army had reached Danwa and were advancing on Dawkita.

I accordingly made my preparations for defence, and sent to tell the new King of Bona to send away all non-combatants to the Volta. I also sent runners to all parts of Lobi to summon the promised contingents, and one to meet Captain Cramer, whom I expected to be close at hand.

Soon arrived a messenger having a letter in a cleft stick from the Prince, telling me again that if I wished to be killed I had better stay. To this I sent no reply.

Our three compounds formed a triangle and were about seventy yards apart. Round them the bush had been cleared for about one hundred and fifty yards. Each compound was held by thirteen Haussas; No. 1, on which our flag was flying, being under my command, No. 2 under that of Geinalah, No. 3 under Mr. Ferguson. As our supply of ammunition was limited I gave orders that only picked

shots were to fire, but that when a rush was threatened a volley was to be given.

At about 12.30 the Sofa army came in sight, advancing over the hill in front in a huge square, numbering, as far as we could estimate, about 7,000 men. was flanked by a body of about 400 horsemen, who swept round to the rear of the town, but were driven back by the Lobis. A body of them then, passing along the river bank, occupied the waterhole, which was about three hundred and fifty yards from us, the Bonas who were to have defended it making no resistance. I bitterly regretted the want of a sevenpounder gun which would have enabled me to command this water hole in the now dry bed of the river, as want of water was one of the chief causes of my eventual retirement.

About 4.30 the Sofa bugles sounded, and their riflemen, numbering rather more than 1,000, opened a heavy fire on us from the corner of the bush.

They showed some skill in skirmishing and taking advantage of the cover, and their fire was well directed, though generally too high. Their want of ammunition, of which I had been informed previously, had evidently been supplied from some source or other, as through that night, the next day, and the greater part of the next night they kept up an unintermitted fire, and did the same at intervals for the rest of the four days and nights.

Our picked shots in each hut replied by picking them off as they exposed themselves, Ferguson and Geinalah, who were first-rate shots, doing special execution. When at times they came to the edge of the cover and seemed likely to attempt a rush across the open space around our compounds, a volley was fired which sent them back into cover.

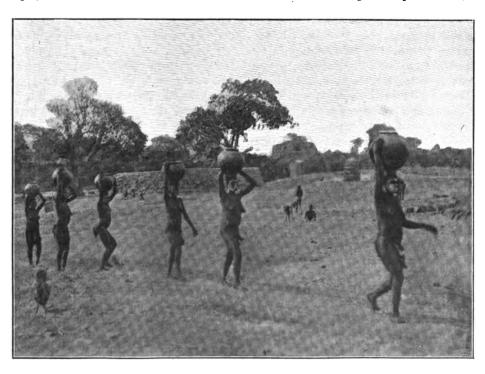
The Haussas showed admirable steadiness under fire, and I cannot speak too highly of their conduct and courage.

Of the effects of our fire I had afterwards a graphic description from my gaoler, who said that every bullet killed, and that some went through two or three men, and that the volleys were dreadful. He said that of his own company, which fought in four ranks, only one rank remained after the third day. Though they fought four deep only the first rank was allowed to fire, as without this precaution "the backs of the heads of those in front were blown off."

On March 31st, after three hours' heavy firing, there was a sudden pause, and a messenger was soon seen approaching with a letter in a cleft stick.

In this letter the Prince said that "he did not wish the English to die of hunger and thirst; that his quarrel was not with them, but with the Bonas and Lobis; and we had better go away across the water," that is, the Volta.

From the messenger, a captive Bona, I



Ladies of Gurunsi carrying water.

(See p. 494 May IDLFR.)

learned that the Sofas had lost heavily, and, being greatly disheartened by our unexpected resistance, were likely to retire.

My reply to the message was that "the Sofas had attacked me, and had better retire, for I should not do so." Heavy firing soon began again and continued till dark. That evening we held a council of war, and decided that we must expect no help from the Lobis, who seemed incapable of combining for concerted action in spite of all my exhortations and exposition of Æsop's fable. We had no news of Captain Cramer, had only one day's water left, and were running short of ammunition. We therefore decided that unless help came we would try to fight our way through the next night, knowing how reluctant the Sofas were to move or fight in the darkness.

The next day the Bonas who had not already escaped began to give themselves up, and so we did not feel bound to remain to defend an empty town.

At about 4.30 compounds Nos. 2 and 3 were in flames and their defenders retreated to my compound, losing in the short passage one killed and six wounded, one mortally. Mr. Ferguson had a bullet through the lower part of his leg, which, however, had not touched the bone or arteries. The enemy occupied the abandoned compounds and opened fire from them, but a small wall on my roof served as a traverse and shielded us.

Our misfortunes seemed to embolden the enemy, who came in large numbers to the edge of the bush and kept up a tremendous fire with rifles and "dane guns," to which we replied with an occasional volley when a rush seemed imminent. At dusk the firing ceased, and we decided that our chance had come, as the Sosas would be sure to disperse in quest of food.

Our entrance was commanded by the next compound, so we had to descend from the roof, on the farther side, by a short rude ladder.

We formed a hollow square, with wounded and carriers in the centre, and sat down in our places in the darkness till our time should come.

As the enemy began to light large fires we decided to move at once, being able to take nothing with us except our shotriddled flag.

Before we had advanced fifty yards the Sofas in the next compound opened a straggling fire, shouting, "the white man is off to Wa."

From the bush 100 yards ahead an ill-directed fire was also opened on us, but we delivered two good volleys and went straight ahead into the bush. The volleys cleared the way effectually, the enemy not seeming to care to try conclusions at close quarters. Our guide, a Lobi, had promised to take us by a path to the left of the ordinary way, and towards this we hastened over the roughest of ground, while the Sofa camp resounded with shouts, and fires blazed in every direction. The enemy fortunately confined their efforts to endeavouring to cut us off on the ordinary road which we had avoided. Every now and then we had to halt and re-form, and once I found Ferguson missing, my hammock-men having thrown him down in a panic. To my great relief he soon came limping in with the aid of a carrier.

He was put into a hammock hastily improvised, and I gave the carriers a hint that I carried a gun. After about four miles we reached the narrow path, got some food at a village, and arrived at the Volta about eight a.m. I here found that the rear force of my square, consisting of thirteen men with a corporal and bugler, was missing, but I understood that they had a Lobi guide, and eventually they all came in. As we were halted, and were most of us bathing in the river, we heard some shots fired, and I ordered the men to cross and form up on the opposite bank, sending on the wounded in case we might have to cover the passage of

our missing men. The firing ceased, and we resumed our march to Wa. halt for the night we started early, and soon met Captain Cramer with fifty men, two guns, and rocket-troughs.

My loss at Dawkita out of forty-three men was two killed and eight wounded; the

enemy's we esti mated at about four hundred, but afterwards had reason to suppose that we had underestimated it. We fell back on Wa, and proceeded to get in water and food, asking the King to send out horsemen as scouts. That monarch, who was out of his wits with fear, said that all his men had run away, and leaving us, as he said, to reconnoitre. ran away too.

Early next morning we heard that the Sofas were approaching, and, after a consultation, we decided that our position at Wa was untenable, especially as the only water-supply was

at a distance and easily commanded from adjacent compounds.

We had hardly given the necessary orders when we heard that the Sofas had occupied a water-hole half a mile to the west, and Captains Cramer and Haslewood, Dr. Part, and Mr. Geinalah took fifty men, a gun, and rocket-trough to dislodge them.

Heavy firing followed, and about one p.m. the force returned, having driven the Sofas from their position, but then finding their retreat threatened by large bodies Captain Cramer seemed much of men. pleased with the steadiness of the men, and spoke warmly of Captain Haslewood's gallantry in drag-

ging out of action under heavy fire the gun, which had been overturned. We decided to retire by night, as our knowledge of the Sofa habits in my own experience told us that it was the better course.

It then occurred to me that I tilities. would

might see the Prince and induce him to consent to a cessation of hos-I knew him to be treacherous and cruel, but thought the risk worth incurring in view of the great loss of life, to say nothing of guns and ammunition, which probably result on our retreat, as the car riers, nearly four

hundred in number, would certainly throw everything down and stampede when firing began. I put this proposition before the other officers, but they at first strongly opposed it on the grounds of the risk, saying that I should be uselessly courting death, possibly in some unpleasant form.

After exchanging messages I started for the Sofa camp, attended by my



Captain G. D. Haslewood. (Photo by H. B. Collis, Canterbury.)

2 X 2

dispenser Amateifo and my hammock-man Alhandu as interpreter, under escort of a Sofa chief. I must add that poor Ferguson, though he spoke most positively as to the fate that would befall me, was with difficulty prevented from accompanying me, wounded though he was. Before I went it was definitely decided that, if negotiations failed, or if I were detained, the expedition was to force its way through that night to Daboya.

On reaching the camp I was met by my old acquaintance Abu Bukari Demba, who asked me to wait for a short time. I was then conducted to the place of palaver, and found the Prince, a tall, goodlooking man with rather a weak face, surrounded by his chiefs and courtiers, who were almost to a man young, like Rehoboam's counsellors, while behind them stood a semi-arch of about one thousand riflemen.

The palaver lasted over two hours, and the result of it was that the only terms on which a cessation of hostilities was offered were that my people with all stores, &c., were to come into the Sofa camp. I told them that this was out of the question, and being asked to write an order to that effect I refused to do so.

They then asked me to write saying what the result of the palaver was; this I was glad to do, and wrote to Captain Cramer saying that "the palaver was no good, as their terms were surrender or war." I added nothing as I heard that the Sofas had a man who could read English and French, and after our clear understanding no more was needed. Alhandu, with a Sofa chief, took the letter, and I was placed under guard beneath a tree, when, being worn out by fatigue, I fell asleep. I woke after an hour, and found the Prince and chiefs watching me with some surprise. The messengers returned saying that the white men said that the Commissioner's return was necessary before they could decide, but that they did not think they would come in. I was then told to send

Amateifo to say that "if they did not come in by sunset it would be a very bad palaver for the Commissioner." I gave the message, adding that they were on no account to come. I also asked Captain Cramer to send me plenty of food, as the Prince had consented to this, and I wished to be prepared for any eventualities. This was my last message.

About seven I received a further supply of food—some having been sent after my first message—and some clothes. I was then placed in the compound guard, Abu Bukari giving me to understand that all the war-chiefs had begged the Prince for my life.

About ten, volley firing in the direction of Wa told me that Cramer was breaking through.

My two hammock-men, who had bravely chosen to remain with me, made signs to me that our heads would soon be off, and that we had better therefore finish the whisky. At an early hour I was asked to accompany the Prince to Wa, and found there a head man of carriers who could speak some English. He was unbound and brought as interpreter. returning I was sent to my compound to wait while the Sofas decided upon my fate. After an hour and a half I was brought before the council, and was informed of its decision. "That they had examined my head (figuratively of course) and had found that I was a good man. That they would do me no harm and would send me to the coast, but, as I was a 'big' man, I must go to the Almamy in Jimini. That as I was not afraid to come to the Prince, he had ordered that my men should not be killed but given to me, and also my stores."

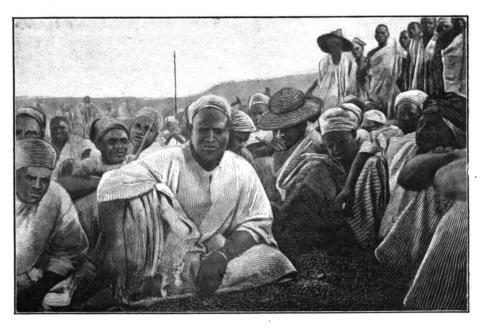
They kept their word in part, for sixteen of the prisoners accompanied me to the coast; but of my stores I saw but little.

During the day, stores, &c., which had been thrown away by the retreating carriers, were brought in, and I had to explain their nature and use for the Prince. The medical stores and appliances, especially the syringes, afforded them infinite amusement. Prisoners also were brought in and given to me, and late in the day I was asked to see a head, which I recognised as that of poor Ferguson. They seemed anxious to excuse themselves for his death, and said that they had only killed him after his persistent refusal to come to the Prince, though they had assured him that I was alive.

I need not describe my feelings at this

through, and that we had nearly trodden on some of them. They had then rushed to our compound for loot.

The next day we started rather hurriedly for Bona. I was mounted on a one-eyed Rosinante, all knobs and joints, the saddle being of wood, and, as the day wore on, my skin wore off. We marched for eleven hours, and as old Siraku had thrown away my hammock-pole I had to sleep on the ground and in the open till we reached Bona.



The banditti chief Amrahia and his party.

(Amrahia is sitting on the right, the central figure being his principal chief Goelu.-May IDLER, p. 493.)

abrupt news of the death of my brave and loyal friend.

My gaoler henceforth was a surly old ruffian named Siraku, who could speak Ashanti, and said that he expected a reward for his duties in the shape of promotion, a horse, and more wives.

I learned from him that the Sofas had been on the point of raising the siege of Dawkita, but had then had information of our small numbers; also that he and many others had thought it prudent to lie down after receiving our volleys as we broke On the fifth day we halted to make ready for the triumphal entry.

The Prince and chiefs arrayed themselves and their horses in all their finery, and I noticed that Krama Amara, who commanded the riflemen, proudly wore an old dressing-gown of mine over his silk attire.

The procession was met by twenty of the Prince's wives, lightly clad, who sang and danced before us.

We then came to a sort of parade-ground where the army and all the inhabitants

were drawn up round a great oval. At four points bands were stationed, one having wooden dulcimers, another horns made from elephant's tusks, a third a kind of four-stringed harps, to which they sang, while the fourth consisted of the Prince's wives who also sang to an accompaniment of sleigh bells and cymbals. Three times round this oval did the Prince and his chief gallop, rein up their steeds before each of the bands to shout, fire guns promiscuously, and wave swords with wild gesticulations.

This was evidently meant to show their bravery in battle, but they are always well to the rear when there is any chance of stopping a bullet, and the men are only kept to the front by threats of decapitation.

If the men do not fight properly their chief is well flogged pour encourager les autres.

A second performance was afterwards given in the Prince's own compound for the benefit of his suite and household.

After this I was taken to rather indifferent quarters, but was not subjected to any annoyance, except from the constant influx of curious visitors, unwashed and odoriferous.

The length and straightness of my nose, often compared by my friends to a jib-boom, seemed to excite great interest, and they kept on patting their fingers in a straight line against their own squat snubs. Afterwards, in Jimini, one old Sofa amused me by repeating, whenever he caught my eye, his one word of English, "Gentleman, gentleman." The people continued to pester me to give them things from my boxes, but the Prince stopped them by the usual threat.

Old Siraku I found once helping himself to my biscuits, and I spoke pretty sharply to him. He began to bluster. He said he would tell his master, Krama Amara, that I was treating him badly and not giving him food. I said, "Go! I shall tell your master that whenever my men have

biscuits, you have biscuits; when they have rum, you have rum." His jaw fell some inches at this, and he implored me not to do so, for the Sofas are rigid teetotalers and rum-drinking would mean death. The jar of rum which I served out to my men and to him was found among our stores and given me by the Prince. I saw the Prince constantly, and used to write English for his amusement, and explain to him—through an interpreter—the pictures in the illustrated papers which he had.

One morning the Prince and chiefs met in state to hear their great deeds sung by the Court Minstrel to the sound of harps. He sang for nearly two hours, and once I heard the word "brune," or white man. Guessing he was saying something disparaging about me, I nodded to him and thanked him in English. The Sofas appeared to understand, and roared with laughter till the poor bard was quite discomfited.

I may say here that the Prince seemed astonished that I had no wife, and offered me one on easier terms than those in the marriage service, the same offer being afterwards made at Jimini.

In the course of my life among the Sofas I was, unfortunately, the witness of a good deal of disgusting cruelty.

At Bona I saw a sick slave, or wife, whose recovery was hopeless, dragged along the ground and thrown out of the town to die, and understood that this was a common practice. While on the march, if a woman who was carrying her child and also a load showed signs of fatigue, the burden was lightened by taking away the child and throwing it into the bush. Men are not taken prisoners, but simply killed, and Siraku told me he never could understand why our heads were not cut off at once

Flogging is the common punishment, the victim being held face downward and flogged till he turns over, the punishment then being continued on the front with perfect indifference. The sufferer utters a word of thanks after each blow, and ends by expressing his gratitude to the man who has ordered his punishment.

On April 18th I left on horseback for Jimini under escort, the Prince accompanying me for a short distance. We passed through an unhealthy country said to yield gold in some quantities, and after passing Sinakoro—named after Samory's former capital—reached Haramonkoro on the 29th. We entered and found the army of nearly four thousand men drawn up in an oval, and Samory, surrounded by his counsellors, seated on an old iron bedstead.

Round the oval the spoil was carried in a kind of Roman triumph, and I was carried after it in my hammock.

I was then called up to Samory, and signs were made to me to kneel before him.

These I disregarded, and shook him by the hand instead, sitting afterwards on my chair beside him to watch the review.

His numerous sons led off by a performance like the one I had witnessed at Bona. This Samory told me was in my honour, but is, in fact, a regular performance every Friday and Sunday.

Then came the turn of Samory's Household Brigade of 500 riflemen, who marched past in full uniform. is, however, hardly the correct term to describe their war-paint. One was arrayed in a fireman's helmet, a frock coat, and a pair of pyjamas; the next in top boots, a tail coat, and a tall hat; the next in a soldier's tunic and a bowler hat, but with bare legs; while he would be followed by another in military trousers, a morning coat, and a tam-o'-shanter. Every possible garment and head-gear was worn in every possible combination, and the tout ensemble would have been too grotesque for a scene in a burlesque—and yet prudence forbade me to smile. Samory himself was a tall, fine-looking man with a rather pleasant face.

I was then sent to rather comfortable quarters, and was secure against intrusion, for I was told that I was to have the same rights as a son, and was to flog anyone who was troublesome.

I had several conversations with this autocrat, in which he did most of the talking, and I am afraid my efforts to impress him with the might of England rather failed, as he seemed to imagine that Sierra Leone was England. For the attack made upon me at Dawkita he accounted for in an original manner, saying that it was not his son's fault, and not my fault, "it was God."

Rifles and ammunition were the object of his desires, but he showed me a factory where cartridges were made from brass rods filed, and then filled with trade powder. He had a few magazine rifles of foreign make and some smokeless powder, but I could not ascertain where they had been obtained, or from what source he got his caps. Savage he might be, but he was not born yesterday. was introduced to his sister and daughter, who had separate establishments of their own, and enjoyed a freedom more West African than Mohammedan. They were both good-looking women of pleasant manners, and received me very kindly, being very anxious to learn all about white men and their manners and customs. Samory's sister, indeed, went so far as to suggest that she should be the envoy who was to accompany me to the coast, but fortunately this embarrassment was spared me.

Samory has given up active service, and has retired, like Cincinnatus, to cultivate his cabbages; indeed, he cultivates the country round his capital with great success, while his sons do the plundering. He seemed to administer justice among his people fairly and not unkindly, though the most cruel punishments were sometimes inflicted, such as burning alive, starving to death, and pegging over an ant-hill, &c. Before the Ashanti

expedition the price of slaves varied from twenty pieces of cloth for a child of nine years old to twenty-seven pieces for a "very fine" woman, but since that time it has fallen, and the "very fine" woman now only fetches from eight to ten pieces.

I tried hard to recover some of my necessaries from the hand of the spoiler, and my tooth-brush was graciously restored, as was also a shaving-glass, one side of which was a magnifier, and which apparently Samory thought to be "no canny."

My hair-brushes I tried in vain to recover; Samory refused to part with them, and as he is as bald as a coot, being perfectly clean-shaven, it has always been a mystery to me what on earth he did with them.

It was originally intended that I should stay at least ten days in Jimini, but after I had been there for three Samory seemed suddenly anxious that I should return. On May 4th, therefore, I left for Bontuku, having with me sixteen of my own people and an escort of nine Sofas, bearing a present of two heavy gold anklets for the Governor, and being accompanied by Samory for a mile or two on a small pony.

Of my homeward journey I need say little except that I travelled with great

difficulty, being very ill from the aftereffects of dysentery, aggravated by want of medicines and proper food. The supplies sent to me from Wa consisted chiefly of biscuits, jam, and lard, and I only had received meat about once a week.

From Bontuku I sent a runner to Kumasi for necessary supplies, and on reaching Ashanti I despatched another, asking for a doctor to be sent to meet me as my strength was failing fast.

I just managed to reach a village two days' journey from Kumasi, having spent the previous day in the bush in heavy rain.

Here, fortunately, Dr. Part met me just in time, and I was enabled to proceed to Kumasi, whence after a rest of five days I was carried to the coast, reaching Accra on June 14th.

Here I received the heartiest welcome from my friend and chief, the Governor, the late Sir William Maxwell, K.C.M.G., who died a few months afterwards from an illness brought on by the bravery and devotion which led him to encounter the extremest fatigues and hardships in the service of his country.

(The bravery of the Haussas who took part in the defence of Dawkita has been rewarded by the award of the West African Medal with special clasp.)





THE PERFIDY OF MRS. TUCKER.

BY MALCOLM BRODIE.

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD GRAY.

"BEGGIN' your pardon, ma'am," said
Mrs. Horniblow, "I can smell
'em cookin' at this minute!"

"Do you mean to insinuate that I'm telling you a falsehood, I should like to know?" said Mrs. Tucker.

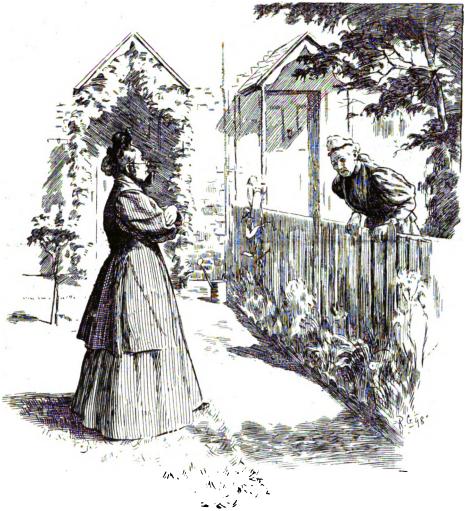
The two old ladies, each in her own strip of back garden, stood glaring defiantly at one another over the dividing fence. It was high enough to prevent any possibility of personal violence, and this was fortunate; for they were both quivering with rage, and relations were so strained that a conflict seemed imminent. Mrs. Horniblow, tall, gaunt, and grim, hung with claw-like fingers to the flimsy wooden partition, and bent over threateningly towards Mrs. Tucker, who, feeling conscious of her disadvantage in point of stature, did her best to make up for it by a show of moral elevation. She stood like a fortress in the centre of her little grass plot, her eyes flashing with unwonted fire behind her gold-rimmed spectacles, and her expansive bosom heaving with righteous indignation.

"Let me repeat to you, Mrs. Horniblow," she said, speaking with studied deliberation and weighty emphasis; "let me repeat to you that I know nothing at all about your mutton-chops. Them you can smell cooking in my kitchen I ordered from Parfitt's young man myself, not two hours ago, as can be swore to by me and my Sarah in any Court of Justice you like to name." (In moments of excitement Mrs. Tucker's parts of speech were apt to go beyond her control—but her meaning was quite clear.) "If yours ain't come what you ordered, that's

between you and him, and no concern of mine as I can see; and its like your impertinence to disbelieve what I say and accuse me of takin' 'em. For let me tell you this, ma'am, once and for all, I've never told you nor nobody else a untruth yet, so sure as I stand here; and what's more, by the Lord's grace I never will, not for anything in the heaven above or the earth beneath!"

With this majestic peroration, Mrs. Tucker turned on her heel and sailed indoors with all the dignity she could muster, her antagonist meanwhile staring speechlessly at the retreating figure. Such an unexpected display of spirit on the part of the mild, easy-going old lady quite took Mrs. Horniblow's breath away, as she would herself have expressed it, and deprived her of all power of retort. She had been accustomed to look upon her next-door neighbour as a safe butt for her ill-temper—a good-natured, long-suffering little woman, who might be annoyed and insulted with impunity; and, like all bullies, she felt a distinct shock when her victim turned upon her, for the first time showing signs of retaliation.

But by her offensive imputations on her neighbour's good faith, Mrs. Horniblow had wounded that worthy old lady's tenderest feelings. If there was one feature in her own character, above all others, in which Mrs. Tucker took a pardonable pride, it was her extreme truthfulness. It was her boast that she had never told a lie nor made a promise that she did not fulfil; and to cast the smallest doubt upon anything that she asserted, was a certain way to rouse the



She stood like a fortress.

temper lying dormant behind her gentle demeanour.

For months she had patiently endured a course of annoyance, amounting almost to persecution, at the hands (and tongue) of her disagreeable neighbour. There seemed to be no particular reason why these two old widows, living lonely lives in a dull suburban road, should not have been very good friends. But Mrs. Horniblow, the senior resident by a year or so, was innately quarrelsome; and, even in her first impulses of friendliness, had by her somewhat aggressive advances

offended the susceptibilities of Mrs. Tucker. The latter, although anxious to avoid anything in the shape of "unpleasantness," could not conceal the fact that she was not desirous of becoming intimate; and Mrs. Horniblow, who much preferred the excitement of war to the monotony of peace, had eagerly seized upon this pretext to commence a series of small annoyances, for the invention of which she seemed to have a positive genius. She was able to devote her whole time and attention to this fascinating pursuit, having apparently

distractions. She seemed to be quite alone in the world; nobody had ever been seen to visit her, and the postman seldom took her any letters. Mrs. Tucker, who had quite a large circle of friends and relations, could not help feeling rather sorry for the lonely old woman, and had frequently given that reason for inaction when Sarah, her faithful handmaid, angered by some fresh "piece of imperence," had vainly tried to excite her mistress to measures of reprisal.

But now all kinder feelings were swallowed up in a keen desire for revenge. Mrs. Tucker entered her house, bristling with wrath; and Sarah plainly discerned that no words from her were required, on this occasion, to arouse her mistress to a due sense of injury. So she remained discreetly silent, as the old lady, breathing hard, and unusually red in the face, swept through the kitchen. ascended to her snug parlour upstairs, Mrs. Tucker subsided into her easy-chair to await dinner and smooth her ruffled plumage. She found herself going through again in her mind the exciting incidents of the last few moments; she could hear once more Mrs. Horniblow's taunting voice and her own indignant rejoinders. To be accused of taking advantage of a butcher-boy's carelessness in order to misappropriate somebody else's mutton-chops! And, as if that were not sufficient insult, to have doubts cast upon her veracity! It was intolerablethe last straw on her weighty burden of injuries; and she would endure it no longer!

She considered that she had come out of the late encounter with some credit; at any rate, no retort had been offered to her final outburst, and she retained a vivid impression of her enemy's look of discomfiture. But this advantage must be followed up at once by a crushing blow, if it were to be of any permanent benefit; and as Mrs. Tucker sat down to her dinner, her mind was busy devising possible schemes of condign vengeance.

At this moment the peremptory knock of the postman resounded through the little house, and, in her praiseworthy anxiety to "save Sarah's legs," Mrs. Tucker rose from the table and trotted to the front door. She was expecting news of a sick niece, and she tore open the envelope without examining it as she returned to her parlour. She resumed her seat at the table, and unfolded the letter.

The handwriting was unfamiliar, and the address at the top of the page was also strange to her—some street in Liverpool. The letter began "Dear Madam." She turned to the signature—"Henry Burton." Who might he be? She knew nobody of that name. With a pleasing sense of mystery she read on:—"I fear that what I have to tell will cause you great grief, and I beg you, before reading farther, to prepare yourself for very sad tidings. I would have come in person to break the news to you, but my health is not equal to such a long journey. Your son has met with a fatal accident—"

Mrs. Tucker stopped short in her reading, and dropped the letter on the table. Her son? She had no son. This must be some mistake. She picked up the envelope, which had fallen on to the floor, and read:—"Mrs. Horniblow, 29, Vernon Road. Balham."

She sat staring at the paper before her, a little dazed for the moment. What a stupid mistake on the postman's part, to be sure—very awkward, too, under the circumstances! She must, of course, send the letter in next door at once, with a word of apology for having unintentionally opened it. Nothing more could be expected of her than that, surely, considering——

But now Mrs. Tucker was on her feet, moving to and fro with increasing agitation. The last few words she had read were repeating themselves over and over in her brain, and their significance was beginning to dawn upon her.

"Your son has met with a fatal accident."

Then that cross-grained old woman next door had a son-in Liverpool-a long way off. She was even fond of him, perhaps; and he of her. The letter seemed to imply that there was but one. And now he was dead, and his mother did not know it. She, Mrs. Tucker, was the only person in Balham who knew it. For all practical purposes, she was the only person who knew it at all. The only person. True, she was not on good terms with her neighbour; yet the tremendous events of half an hour ago seemed curiously trifling and distant now. she had only learnt this news by accident -was it by accident? Mrs. Tucker was a devout woman, and she began to think she saw signs of purpose in this matter. That letter, casually opened and read, would have been a sore blow to the mother. The blow must yet fall; but it might be softened. The victim might be warned of its coming, and encouraged to bear it. Whose duty was that?

Mrs. Tucker knelt down beside her untasted meal, and buried her face in her hands.

Presently she arose, and putting the letter back into the envelope with a shaking hand, made her way to the front door. Her duty lay clear before her, and she was going to do it at once. For a moment she had to lean against the the wall; things were going round, and there was a humming in her ears. had had very little acquaintance with death or trouble in the course of her placid, uneventful life, and she felt a little upset. Then she opened her door, and the fresh air revived her. The sun was shining, the trees were waving cheerfully in the breeze. A boy was passing the house, whistling a popular tune, and the children at No. 27 were playing noisily in their front garden. Something was wrong here, surely. Why did not all this mirth and brightness cease? Mrs. Tucker fancied she had once dreamed of this. Here was Mrs. Horniblow's gate—hard to open. Yes, she had noticed the tradesmen having trouble with it. The front steps were not so white as they might be, and a large piece of stucco near the window had fallen away. Some people took no pride—Lord forgive her, what was she thinking of? She knocked at the door.

For some little time nobody came to open it. Mrs. Tucker waited patiently, and fancied she heard movements inside the house. Perhaps Mrs. Horniblow had seen her coming and did not mean to admit her; or she might be arranging with her youthful domestic for a suitably chilling reception, and was impressing upon that somewhat uncouth damsel the necessity for a passing assumption of dignity. Mrs. Tucker had almost expected some such delay, and was glad of the short respite; it enabled her to prepare in her mind a few phrases that should lead up to the object of her visit. she felt a sudden impatience to get the trying ordeal over, and knocked again. Now she heard heavy footsteps stumbling up the stairs, and along the passage. The door opened, and she beheld the untidy servant, even more dishevelled than usual, with a strange wild look on her red face.

"I should like to see Mrs. Horniblow ——" began Mrs. Tucker; but the maid cut her short.

"Oh, please do come in, mum, and see to missis—she's took queer, and I'm afraid she's awful bad—I've just got her on to the sofa in the breakfast-room, and there she's a-layin' and groanin' somethink dreadful, she is—The dear, oh dear—and the girl burst into loud sobs of fright.

Without a word Mrs. Tucker entered and went hastily down the stairs into the front room. The house was so like her own in shape, arrangements, and even furniture, that she felt as if she were at home, though she had never before crossed the threshold.

Mrs. Horniblow was lying awkwardly on the hard horse-hair sofa, her eyes shut, and her head thrown back. Her face was a ghastly, ashen-grey colour, and for the moment Mrs. Tucker thought her dead. But she still breathed, and her heart was beating feebly. Mrs. Tucker laid her flat and loosened her dress, bidding the servant bring brandy and cold

water. Under these rough and ready ministrations, the sufferer began to show faint signs of returning consciousness. Mrs. Tucker despatched the girl for a doctor, and remained watching for some further recovery on the part of the stricken woman.

Mrs. Horniblow's

eyes slowly opened, and rested on her neighbour's anxious face bending over her. No sign of recognition appeared in them; but presently she spoke, thickly. "Mrs. Tucker." she said with-

"Mrs. . . Tucker," she said, without any apparent surprise.

"Yes, my dear, yes," said the old lady, gently taking one bony hand in her own. "But don't you mind me. Do you feel better now?"

Mrs. Horniblow did not withdraw her hand, but lay quite still, her eyes fixed on her neighbour's kindly face. The thought crossed the latter's mind that this was a very different meeting to their last, and she wondered, with a pang of regret, if the excitement of their dispute had brought on this attack. Then Mrs. Horniblow spoke again, still slowly and with difficulty.

"Yes . . . the pain's easier . . . But I'm goin' this time. . . I feel it. . ."

"Don't say that, my dear," said Mrs.

Tucker; but she knew instinctively that it was so indeed.

"Me and you . . . haven't been the best of friends," continued the other; "and I was most to blame. . . . But you mustn't think bad of me. . . . I've had a deal of trouble . . and my temper's not what it was."



"Do you feel better now?"

"No, no, my dear," said Mrs. Tucker, "that's all past and done. Try and think of me as your friend now. Is there anything you would like me to do for you?"

And now for the first time a dim light began to show in Mrs. Horniblow's eyes.

"Yes, yes . . . there is . . . only one thing . . . but it's very important. . . . My boy . . ."

She paused; and her friend's mind flew back to the fatal letter, which she had almost forgotten for the time. What was the mother going to say? Perhaps she had received news of his death from some other source, after all. Mrs. Tucker listened breathlessly.

"My boy Ted . . . he's all I have in the world . . . and he . . . we quarrelled . . . I was too hard on him . . . I see that now . . . but I was his mother . . . there was only him and me . . . and he shouldn't have said what he did . . ."

The voice was growing weaker, and the chill hand was tightening its grasp.

"I want you to tell him . . . my
Ted . . . tell him I forgive him
. . . and bless him . . . with
my last breath . . . forgive and
bless . . . you'll find
address . . . work-basket . . .
do that for me . . . promise me you
will . ."

Mrs. Tucker's head was bent, and her free hand was clenched. She wanted time to think, and to decide what she must say—but there was no time.

"Promise! . . . Promise! . . ." repeated Mrs. Horniblow, in an agonised whisper. There was a strange sound in her throat, and the clutch of her hand was like iron.

Mrs. Tucker threw her whole being into an intense wordless prayer. She prayed that she might be enabled to tell this one great lie—and tell it well.

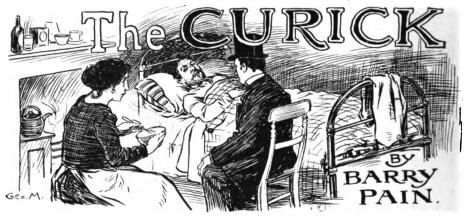
Then she raised her head, and looked steadfastly into the other's glazing eyes.

"I promise you faithfully I will," she said.

Over the dying woman's haggard face came a look of relief—almost a smile.

"Thank God," she whispered; "I'm ready now . . . ready . . ."





(Illustrated by Geo. Morrow.)

PUST theer come the Sad'dy's rent, and 'e were rood ter me, Next I gort th' inspecter, and you knows 'ow 'awsh they be, Third I gort the doctor—'is remawks was pretty grim, But lawst I gort the curick, and I evened up on 'im.

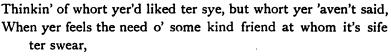


When yer 'asn't gort no work yer doesn't git no pye, And when the cash ain't 'andy, then be keerful whort yer sye, As sure as you're a week be'ind, you're goin' ter repent, If you're not extry civil ter the chap whort calls fur rent.

When you've bin a-bed fur weeks, gort rhoometics crool, Kids'ull (bein' darny) tike thet chawnce ter cut their school; Then—it's barnd ter 'appen—th' inspecter's on yer track. Well, don't mind if 'e is a fool, jest you don't awnser back.

Them doctors, they is simular. Arst questshings? By the score, And pretty privit questshings tew. Their orders? Rawther more. And if yer disobeys 'em, then they gives it to yer 'ot. But dew I cheek them doctors? Most emphetically not.

But the curick—ho, the curick! When you're lyin' ill in bed,

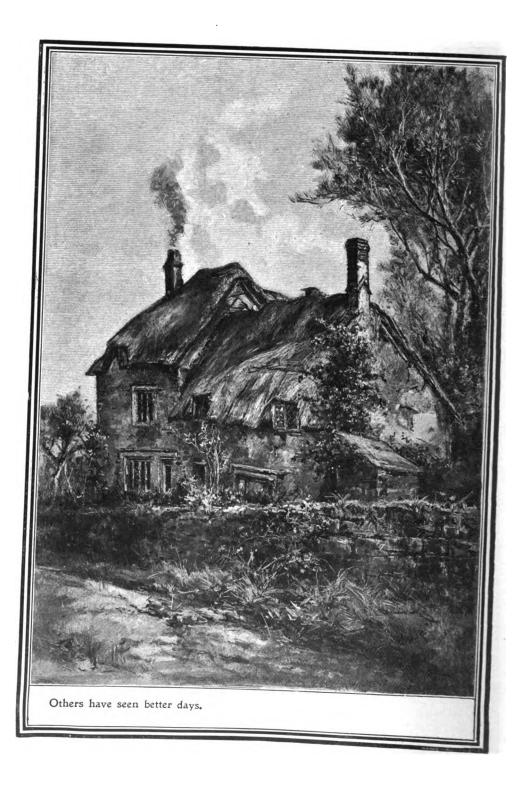


It's a joy ter 'ear the curick come a-stumblin' up the stair.

I awsks 'im whort 'e's pide fur it, and wheer 'e bought thet fice, I tells 'im don't warnt no trac's a-litt'rin' up the plice, Nor yet no 'arf-bred monkeys interferin' with my sins, I lyes inter 'im proper—an' the beggar stands an' grins.

Thet's it—it evens up the score, and yet it don't wuk right, I says, "O tike yer ugly self art o' my bloomin' sight!" And when 'e never said a word, but went, ter my surprise, Blowed if I didn't call 'im beck and apololergize.





THE IDLER OUT OF DOORS.

IVY AND OLD STONES.

BY WALTER RAYMOND.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. ARTHUR ROUSE.



HERE is a charm belonging to an ancient building which clings more closely than the ivy that overruns its walls.

It is not the yellow

lichen, so much like a mere weatherstain; nor the round tufts of bright green moss glistening in the sunlight upon broad tiles of brown stone; nor the pale dust, finer than hour-glass sand, sifting through crevices to mark how passes time with crumbling stones.

These are for the eye. But subtler far than softest shadow ever thrown by buttress across window pane, or evening mystery lurking under overhanging eaves of thatch, is the human interest that haunts each coin and gable, and stirs imagination with a dream of other men, who planned and built and dwelt and passed away.

To cast its mightiest spell the house must not be tenantless.

The fragmentary ruins of richest pile that ever mourned to see its glory gone, its columns overthrown, and thousands of obscurest names carved on its bones, still hold a grandeur all their own, but lose the tenderness that comes of touch of human-kind. Strangers who flock to gaze may wake their echoes, but can never people them again. They are wrecked and dead—abandoned to decay.

But where the pale blue smoke still coils from antique chimney-top; where hob-nailed oaken door, with iron hinges all across, creaks to and fro as folk pass in and out upon the foot-worn flags, and trellised casement open stands to breathe a mouthful of the summer breeze—that is the house to tempt an Idler from the open air and make him long to go within.

There are many such in Somersetshire, and with histories the most diverse.

Scarcely a village by the road, or hamlet nestling along some byway between the hills, but has its ivy and old stones to show. Abbeys and manor-houses are sprinkled everywhere, and often very near but just away from the beaten track.

Those that are mansions still have most times grown out of all knowledge of their former selves. They have spread their wings. They are heteropterous, and not content with two. More than one generation added something in its turn. And stately oaks in parks, with sheltering cedar trees on summer lawns, half hide them from the view.

Others have seen better days. With pinions clipped and half their grandeur gone they look like folk reduced, who take in lodgers for a livelihood. The orchards creep up to the very doors. The stacks and cowstalls cluster all around. But no misfortune can destroy their native dignity, and so a humbler lot has only brought a simpler homeliness.

I stayed awhile in what was once an abbey, many years ago.

It had a honeysuckle by the porch and

clumps of lavender within a border fenced with box. The blue-tit built in chinks and crannies of the walls, and starlings where a stone was missing underneath the eaves. The cloister was a cider-cellar then. The great brown cider-butts stood in a row before the arches of tall windows with all their tracery walled up. There was

an empty ruined chamber, too, with all the panes of the windows gone; and there, within, the swallows built their masonry against the ancient axehewn oaken beams. The broad-leaved ivy climbed the side and sprawled upon the roof, and hung in shining masses from the pointing end.

Many a dark December night, when not a singlestar peered through the clouds, we went "a-birdbatting" round that old place.

In winter, when the leafless trees are cold and hard frost crusts with rime their naked limbs, birds creep for warmth and dry to roost amongst the only leaves that shield from driving hail and shelter from the wind. Blackbirds and thrushes choose thick hedgerows or the green holly-bush; but sparrows and other of the finches crowd into the ivy against the wall. There we used to catch them in a quaint

old-fashioned way, practised, doubtless, without change for many a hundred years.

For bird-batting in its most genial form only four things are wanted. A net, a lantern, an apple pole, and a visitor from town.

The sprachest of the party takes the net, the stran-

ger must be honoured with the lantern. but anyone who likes may carry an apple pole. We are only sigoing along the garden path, so the guest may just as well keep on his patent boots. We love to see the candle shining on his toes, and note his face looming, bright and intelligent, out of the murk of night.

The man from town is often too intelligent and apt to smile too blandly at our country

ways. We are simple. There is nothing simpler than our "bird-batting-net," except, of course, the carrying of the candle, which lends itself to no mistake. The net is spread on two tall ashen sticks, bent over on the top to form an arch, and raised on high before the ivy wall. The lantern must be held behind the net. The apple poles beat on the leaves. The birds come fluttering straight into the mesh. The ashen



It had a honeysuckle by the porch.



The grist-mill.

sticks are clapped together, and the thing is done.

So determined are small birds to rush at night towards a light, that if you set a lantern down in the far corner of the waggon-house and drive them from their holes amongst the thatch, they will fly to it like moths, and you can catch them in your hands.

Now this is interesting, and amounts almost to instruction in natural history; but for the entertainment of a visitor, if he have never seen it before, there is nothing like taking an owl in the open ground.

Let it first be explained that the owl has great eyes singularly susceptible to the influence of light. Even a farthing rush-light, presented with judgment, is sufficient to astonish and dazzle any owl of not more than ordinary mental capacity. All that is wanted is to be in the right place, and hold the lantern high.

In the home-field beside the brook there is a leaning ash, old as the Ark and hollow as a drum. That is the throne whereon the bird of wisdom was said to sit.

The lantern must not come too near at first, but stands out in the field till all is ready. Then he must hurry up best foot afore.

The night is still. Only once the short "krek-rek" of a moorhen by the ditch breaks in upon the silence.

"Now then. Come on quick. Hold up the lantern—higher—higher. To the right—to the right."

He has only to do what he is told, and does his best, for nobody is more eager to see the sport. But it always happens just at the moment when the owl should be caught there comes a splash—a cry—and then the light goes out.

We take him home to change his boots, warm him up before the fire with gin and cider hot. We get as merry as the birds we caught, and chatter altogether just as they.

"I—I don't believe there ever was an owl," quoth he.

We think there was.

Of all religious houses that to-day are homesteads, none lies more pleasantly under shelter of green hills than the remains of the ancient priory at Montacute. The priory was founded in the eleventh century, but the fragment standing had only just been built when the dissolution came. Doubtless, in the work of destruction, the most modern part was retained, being more easily adapted to humbler domestic uses. It is a handsome gate-house, with a very beautiful oriel window overhanging the lofty arch. What is now the front looks out upon a roadway ascending a gentle slope through

fields; and upon one side, hidden underneath a wood of spreading beech and sombre firs, is the sharp round hill that gave a name to the place. Old-fashioned flowering shrubs grow below the mullioned windows; and around arch and oriel a virginia creeper, in summer fresh and green but brilliant red in fall, climbs up and covers half the battlements.

But much of the beauty of an English village lies in the rich colour and quaint form of humbler dwellings which are fast There is a richness in old passing away. thatch with which no slates or tiles can compare. Scarcer with every year becomes the really old farmhouse, with its row of snug dormers running up into the rounded thatch, its mullioned windows, and great wide chimney built out from the wall, tapering in uneven lines to the small square "tun," as they used to call it, that rises above the ridge. They and the little grist-mill upon the brook are out of date now and dropping into decay. Many of them have a square stone above the porch, cut with initials and the yeargenerally early in the seventeenth century-in which they were built. Here and there one still has a sun-dial, but that is rare.

The old world lingered in such nooks as these. In quiet places, or in the minds of ancient folk, its memory still keeps green. The open hearth and great woodfire died hard, where walls were four feet thick and chimneys wide enough to make a sitting-room. There, from the inner corner, of a winter night, you could look up and see the stars; or, of a summer daytime, catch the screeching of the swifts as they passed darting overhead. And quaint old women-folk in caps and gowns, or men in worsted hose and breeches, with flat brass buttons fastened at the knee, sat round and gossiped when work was done. But all their fireside talk breathed of the open air: of colts and ewes, and how the lambs came on; of woodside pheasants seen in pasture-field.

and how the sunshine glistened on their backs; and whether there were snipe upon the moor.

There was many a joke around the burning logs; and one that used to take place on the other side of the wall.

All rustic jokes are hereditary, handed

down from countless generations, and carried out for ever in the same old way. One thing only was needful --to find a truly guileless soul. Everything else lay always ready to hand.

Your true joker never varied in word or deed. "Did ee ever rub outzide chimley an' zee the sparks come out?"

"No."

"What, never rubbed outzide chimley?"

" No."

"Wull, now! Look-

y-zee, you've a-got to have a girt vlat stone, an' rub 'pon wall like blazes till the vire do come drough."

"Never!"

"Look here. I'll vind ee a stone. Slip drough farmer Sprackman's gardenhatch so quiet as a mouse, an' I'll bide here for fear they should catch sound o' so many steps 'pon path like. You rub so hard as you can; in less 'an vive

minutes you'll zee sparks, ay, a plenty of 'em."

The guileless soul, filled with a spirit of enquiry, rubbed upon the wall like mad.

A most unearthly grating noise, enough to set the soundest teeth on edge, dis-

turbed the farmer Sprackman's family circle around the hearth.

"Tes they two ads o' bwoys," cried he, and grasped his gigwhip and crept a-tiptoe out of the door and round the garden upon the other side. That was the long way about that the sparks had of coming out.

"Get away vrom my chimley," he yelled, between th cracks of his whip. "I'll break the

break the head o' ee—I'll twist the neck o' ee—if you don't get away vrom my chimley."

So it is time to stroll on to the grist-mill.

But the little grist-mill near the bridge at the bottom of the village street is silent. The wheel is broken. The weir is washed down in two places, and the water runs away by the hatch. The farmers sell their corn and buy their flour



Montacute.



and meal from markets far away. And leasing, nowadays, is not of much account when stubble must be combed quite clean with an iron horse-rake. So no dusty miller leans over his half-door, his hair white with flour, his head full of wise thoughts about the toll he shall take. The house is shut. The windows nailed up with boards of deal. There are holes in the roof. One of the stones has been brought out and leans idle against the wall.

On the air from a distance comes a humming sound very like the old song of the wheel. That is only the steam threshing-machine—an item in that new order of things which has pushed aside the little mill.

Far away on the ridge of a range of hills stands an old tower reaching, tall as a spire, above the trees.

It is nothing. Only a folly—such as this:—

SIR JOHN DAW, KNIGHT.

The jackdaw lives in a lofty tower,
Ancient as ever hath been,
Where stones are grey, but an April shower
Freshened the mosses green.
Ivy clambers the northern side;
Clematis clings to the south;
And Jack might be a lord in his pride
If he never would open his mouth.

But Jack! Jack! Jack! You are no gentleman, Jack. You may have stored pelf, But you talk of yourself; You are no gentleman, Jack.

You built your nest o'er a lordly shield,
Nobler never was known,
Silver fesse on azure field,
Jack, it is not your own.
And you shout and boast to all you see,
Though 'twere wise to be humble and meek;
For some say that your son might a gentleman be
If he only were taught how to speak.

But Jack! Jack! Jack!
You are no gentleman, Jack.
Too familiar you are,
And intrusive—by far;
You are no gentleman, Jack.

A boy climbed up on that lordly tower,
Ancient as ever hath been.
Where stones are grey; but an April shower
Moistened the mosses green.
The ivy searched to the north, and soon
The clematis round by the south;
But he never had found those rings and that
spoon
If you never had opened your mouth.

Oh, Jack! Jack! Jack!
You are no gentleman, Jack.
But it's my belief,
No more than a thief;
Or were you a pawnbroker, Jack?





HE curious part of it all was her unique commonplaceness. may sound like a paradox, but it is nevertheless true that she was so dowdy as to be striking. Had it not been for her unattractiveness she would never have been noticed at all. The Hydropathic Establishment, a mock castle on modern lines, perched on a Welsh rock overlooking the sea, was very full, and all the younger women in it were bent on being known by something, either by reason of bizarre attire, by brilliant conversational or musical gifts, by beauty, elegance, grace, or sprightliness. Each had her own little pan of fish to fry, and scant interest to spare for anyone else; but there were several who so far noticed the small, brown, foreign person in drab as to remark on her out-of-the-way homeliness. was, in fact, conspicuous for her insignificance. She spoke scarcely to anyone. shared in no social gathering, wandered about alone, and looked completely inscrutable. Nobody thought enough about her to speculate whether she was unhappy

or only indifferent, except one girl, who mentally decided in favour of the first hypothesis. This girl was, strange to say, one of the Hydro favourites, something of a beauty, merry, clever, and flirtatious. Her name was Aldyth Feverel and she was a fairly successful journalist who had run down in health and been ordered to the sea. She had the cheapest possible room, and took no excursions at her own expense, although several through the admirers who rivalled each other in paying her attentions.

It was because of her trade, probably, that she was first led to muse upon the small, brown, foreign woman in drab, who appealed to her sense of the incongruous, here in this gay assembly of pleasurehunting people, where she seemed a humb'e-bee lost amongst butterflies. Not that she had, apparently, any particular work to do, but there was something about her suggestive of duties and labour, an air of poverty, of penury even, and an apparent enjoyment of perfect rest that spoke of an arduous life. Aldyth analysed her thus, adding a flavour, entirely inimaginary, of brooding sorrow on a recent distress. The cause of the distress could not have been bereavement, because the brown woman wore drab, not black; and it could hardly have been a love affair, judging from her uncomeliness

and middle-aged solidity. So the romantic girl argued. The brown woman was not plain exactly; she had good features and decidedly fine eyes, but her complexion was swarthy, her figure unstylish, her face rather worn and lined, her hair severe. She did not lend herself to romance.

When Aldyth Feverel was at the zenith of her success at the Hydro, chance threw her into the way of the small, brown, foreign woman. The girl, amongst her other gifts, had a sweet voice, and, as concerts were organised pretty often by the visitors, she had been in great request, had become popular. Her éclat, in combination with her engaging face, figure, and wit, had led to the apparent subjugation of the most elegant young man in the He was universally acknowledged to be the most desirable dance and quiet corner partner, being handsome, dashing, well-mannered, and sublimely endowed with self-confidence. His very name carried a savour of sentiment. It was Mortimer L'Estrange, and he looked it. For a week he was constantly by the side of Aldyth, escorting her to the pier concerts, two miles away from the crag on which they were situated, playing tennis with her, practising her accompaniments, taking her out boating or driving. Hydro talked mildly, as Hydros will talk. The elder ladies said they would not allow their daughters to go on so, the younger ones were a trifle envious, but bore it pretty well.

One day there was to be a concert, at which Aldyth was to sing. She happened to be reading in the big drawing-room just before tea, when the small, brown, foreign woman entered, and took a chair by her, drawing it up to the fire with a shiver. It was one of those cold September days when the sea is like an added insult to the icy humidity of everything. Rain dashed against the window panes savagely; wind roared like the well-known beast of Scripture who goeth

about seeking to devour; and the dull, dirty ocean was foaming with fury, its white rage oozing in curds that streaked its metallic face far away to the grey horizon.

"You feel the cold," said Aldyth, with a warming smile. She was very radiant, with a big spray of yellow roses at her breast, given by L'Estrange, who was smoking in the lounge curtained off from the long corridor, where ladies might go if they liked, only it was not supposed to look well.

"Yes," the small person answered, drawing her dirty grey shawl more closely round her shoulders, "it is true I do feel it very much indoors. When I go out and walk I do not mind, but here—it freezes!"

She spoke with a slight accent, not ostentatiously foreign, yet indubitably unenglish. Aldyth drew her into an intermittent conversation, but found her extremely reserved. At last she said outright:

"You are so much alone that I am afraid you must get bored sometimes."

The other laughed, very softly.

"Oh, no," she replied, "it is not that I am bored when I am alone." Then realising that her words might be taken to mean something uncomplimentary, she hastened to add: "Solitude is restful, you know; and unless one talks with those who are—what do you call it?—congenial, I think it is not pleasant to talk at all."

"I'm afraid—" began Aldyth, feeling reproved; but she was interrupted.

"It is kind of you to take pity on my loneliness, and I like speaking to you," the foreign lady observed, with a smile that was exceedingly winning; "you have a heart, I know, as charming as your face and your voice. I heard you singing this afternoon."

"And I hope you will come to hear me again to-night," said Aldyth, "though you don't care for music much, I fancy."

"I have not heard any since I came here," was the somewhat evasive answer. Aldyth laughed.

"You are hard on us," she cried; "we call it music, you know."

They looked straight into each other's eyes, and smiled with sympathethic understanding.

"I call your singing music, please believe," declared the elder lady.

Aldyth went away more puzzled than ever from this interview. The apparition of the small, brown, foreign woman at the door of the Recreation Room that evening, when her first song began, gave her a start, and made her dreadfully nervous. She was, she did not know why, extremely anxious to sing particularly well; but she was conscious of failure and of the utter banality of the song she had chosen. It was encored vociferously, but she felt uncomfortable somehow.

Next day her globe of beatitude was shattered. A girl arrived who took the whole Hydro by storm in twenty-four hours. She was not only handsome, but magnificently attired, and it was rumoured that she had brought her maid—a thing of prestige in a middle-class assemblage. Tall and blonde, majestic in bearing, cool and somewhat supercilious, with a fine alluring smile, the newcomer started well by asking Mortimer L'Estrange, who was standing in the doorway as she entered, to fish in the cab for a glove she had dropped. He transferred his allegiance from that moment. when next day he discovered that the new beauty had a strong and penetrating voice, her victory was complete. There was a dance the night after her arrival, and she figured on his programme repeatedly, while Aldyth Feverel, who had formerly been upbraided if she permitted him less than three waltzes, came in for one set of lancers only. She bore her head loftily, but the smart was very great. At about ten o'clock she entered the Reading Room, and sat down with a

book, pretending to read. Her colour was dazzling, and she looked exceedingly attractive in her black low-bodiced frock, relieved only by some real roses. But her rival was splendidly gowned in white satin, and looked like a queen. The recreant Mortimer, youth of the familiar type, had eyes only for the latter.

The small, brown, foreign person sat in her corner, and glanced furtively at the deserted girl from under the heavy rims of large dark eyes, but she did not speak.

Next morning she was standing hatted and cloaked at the door of the big Recreation Room listening to the new beauty's voice, when she saw Aldyth Feverel go out, clad in serge and carrying a stick, with an air that meant climbing. Without waiting to hear the end of the song which Miss Mabel Mathers was singing to a select group of callow admirers, including Mortimer L'Estrange, who stood entranced by the ill-produced tones of her brazen voice as she delivered a passionate love ditty with dashing indifference, the small foreign person buttoned up her gloves and went out also, keeping the serge-clad figure well in view.

She had no easy task, for the rate at which Aldyth walked was a furious one. She strode the hill from the sea as if to escape from a haunting melancholy. Presently she slackened her pace, looked around, and made for a steep rocky road on her left, a road of Nature's own handiwork, narrow, rough, almost perpendicular. Up she climbed, panting; up, after her, mounted the small, brown, foreign woman manfully. As they reached the top the view grew more beautiful every moment. It was one of those uncertain days when sunlight and shadow chase each other over sea and landscape in a lovely prismatic dance of colour. Patches of sepia, indigo, and ultramarine divided the ocean, which lay on one side, into varied sections, while on the other, here slated roof or river shone like glass, there violet shades

fell softly on the green of pasture or gold of corn, chequered into tiny irregular devices by hedge and bramble-covered Stretching right away into the wall. bluish haze of distance rose the gentle undulations of those Welsh hills that seem so wild and craggy from below, so smoothly curving from above, where wooded vales and heathery slopes securely drowse, and where the squat, white cottages, dotted down like mushrooms, send up the grey curling smoke from their solid rocky chimneys, showing now and then against a background of purple heath.

When she reached one of these quaint dwellings, Aldyth paused and threw herself down on the grass, leaning her elbows on her knees, her chin in her hands, while she gazed through the trees at a glimpse of blue sea far away. The little whitewashed cabin snuggled in a nest of green below, half-shadowed by rugged apple trees. Here the small, brown, foreign woman reached her, and spoke to her in a low tone. The girl turned suddenly, then sharply moved her head aside, but not before her companion had seen eyes swimming in tears.

"You are not happy," said the small, brown, foreign woman, plumping herself down also on the grass, and taking Aldyth's hand in her own; "won't you tell me what distresses you?"

The girl laughed in a sob. Her first instinct of concealment vanished.

"It is nothing—nothing but silly, hurt pride," she declared, in a tone of selfdisgust.

There was a concert that night at the Hydro, at which Miss Feverel was not asked to sing. Miss Mabel Mathers was advertised in large written characters on a board that hung in the long corridor for that purpose, and everyone understood that she was to be considered the star of the evening. Just before her first song, however, a slight sensation occurred

when, in the middle of the hall, the small. brown, foreign person rose from her seat and, followed by Miss Aldyth Feverel, advanced to the side of the platform, where stood a gentleman who was giving out the different items to be performed. She carried a roll of music in her hand.

"May I sing now?" she asked simply.
The concert promoter stared aghast,
and stammered.

"I should like to sing," continued the foreign lady, smiling. "Nobody has asked me, but I wish to sing once, and now. Miss Feverel will play my accompaniment."

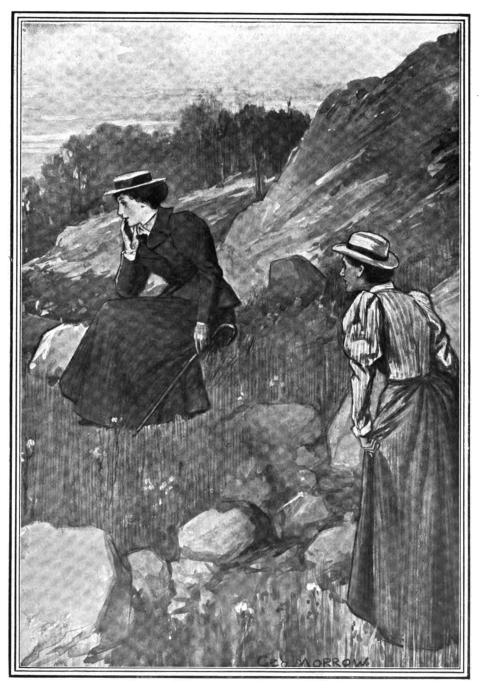
"Very pleased, I'm sure," the gentleman muttered, nervously, "but—won't you—shall I—your name?"

"It is of no matter," remarked the small woman, sweetly, as she stepped past him through the doorway and up three stairs on to the platform, throwing aside her drab knitted shawl as she appeared before the rows of chattering people.

There was a loud murmur of astonishment!

She stood there in a plain black velvet gown, low at the neck, and the blaze of a most magnificent diamond necklace dazzled every eye. It flashed her into immediate importance and, with the calm regality of her manner, subdued the whispers of the amazed audience to an awed silence before she uttered a note.

Her song was a brilliant one from a grand opera. The first phrase electrified everyone, and sent a cold shiver over the crowded Recreation Room. For such singing had never been heard there before. It was a rushing cascade of glorious melody, sweeping everything before All the petty jealousies, the foolish gossip, the carping criticisms, and silly flippancies that five minutes earlier had circulated through the room were whirled away on one heart-warm emotion of gratitude towards the artist who could thus elevate every soul, that, for the time at least, it might reach its highest point of



"You are not happy."

development; for we are always thankful to be made to feel at our best, to have our smaller selves sunk out of sight and belief, to gain even a momentary certain consciousness that we have souls at all!

The voice, the method, the passion of the singer, were beyond criticism. She touched with unerring instinct and art combined every chord of sympathy, till even the most unmusical soul present throbbed in response. Then the last note fell; the glory that seemed to have flooded the vulgar room in a glow of heavenly sunset faded; and the audience, as one man, drew a deep breath of relaxed tension before it effervesced in wild applause.

A breathed word, started somewhere, flew from mouth to mouth, the magic word "Kalmé," the name of a Neapolitan prima donna, famous throughout Europe, whom someone had heard, and now recognised. The whisper gathered tone till it was shouted with the recall.

"Kalmé! Encore! Kalmé!" rose up on every side, until the small, brown, foreign person came forward again and bowed graciously before she sang once more; this time an English ballad.

When the vociferous appreciation had somewhat subsided, the gentleman who

presided remembered Miss Mabel Mathers and asked for her. But the young lady had retired to her room "seriously indisposed." The concert ended flatly.

One of the first to come forward effusively and thank the small, brown, foreign woman for the great treat she had afforded the Hydro was Mr. Mortimer L'Estrange.

"You have indeed given us a surprise, Madame Kalmé!" he declared, in his most winning manner, with a smile that might have turned the head of the Sphinx.

"There are often surprises at the Hydro, signor," she replied, grayely. "I, too, have found them. Until to-night I did not know there were so many agreeable persons here!"

She left next day, with Aldyth Feverel. The two had cemented a fast friendship, to which the latter owed much of her future happiness and success. Mortimer L'Estrange was greatly inclined to depart also, and he would have done so had not the morning train brought a fresh girl to the Hydro, one who was prettier even than Mabel Mathers, and much more sportive looking. She brought a number of trunks and the best bicycle he had ever seen. So he stayed on.





The Short-eared Owl.

OWLS IN A VILLAGE.

BY W. H. HUDSON.

ILLUSTRATED BY FRED. MILLER.

I N November, when tramping in the Midlands, I paid a visit to a friend who had previously informed me in describing the attractions of the little village he lived in, that it was haunted by owls.

The night-roving bird that inhabits the village and its immediate neighbourhood is, in most cases, the white or barn owl, the owl that prefers a loft in a barn or a church tower for home and breeding-place to the hollow, ivied tree. The loft is dry and roomy, the best shelter from the storm and the tempest, although not always from the tempest of man's insensate animosity. The larger wood owl is supposed to have a different disposition, to be a dweller in deep woods, in love with "seclusion, gloom, and retirement," -a thorough hermit. It is not so everywhere, certainly not in my friend's Gloucestershire village where the white owl is unknown, while the brown or wood owl is quite common. Yet the district is not thickly wooded; the woods in it are small and widely separated. There is, however, a deal of old hedgerow timber and many large trees scattered about the fields. These the owl inhabits, and is abundant simply because the gamekeeper is not there with his everlasting gun; while the farmers look on the bird rather as a friend than an enemy.

To go a little further into the matter, there are no gamekeepers because the landowners cannot afford the expensive luxury of hand-reared pheasants. country is, or was, a rich one; but the soil is clay so extraordinarily stiff that four or five horses are needed to draw a plough. It is, indeed, strange to see five huge horses, all in line, dragging a plough, and moving so slowly that, when looked at from a distance, they appear not to move at all. If here and there a little wheat is still grown, it is only because, as the farmers say, "We mun have straw." The land has mostly gone out of cultivation, many vacant farms could be had at about five shillings an acre, and the landlords would in many cases, when pay day came round, be glad to take half-acrown and forgive the rest.

The fields that were once ploughed are used for grazing, but the sheep and cattle on them are very few; one can only suppose that the land is not suitable for grazing purposes, or else that the farmers are too poor to buy sufficient stock.

Viewed from some eminence, the wide, green country appears a veritable waste; the idle hedges enclosing vacant fields, the ancient scattered trees, the absence of life, the noonday quiet, where the silence is only broken at intervals by some distant bird voice, strangely impress the mind as by a vision of a time to come and of an England dispeopled. It is restful; there is a melancholy charm in it similar to that of a nature untouched by man, although not so strong. Here, everywhere are visible the marks of human toil and ownership - the wave-like, parallel ridges in the fields, now mantled with grass, and the hedges that cut up the surface of the earth with innumerable segments of various shapes and sizes. is not wild, but there is something in it of the desolation that accompanies wildness, a promise soon to be fulfilled, now that grass and herbage will have freedom to grow, and the hedges that have been trimmed for a thousand years will no longer be restrained from spreading.

In this district the farmhouses and cottages are not scattered over the country. The farm-buildings, as a rule, form part of the village; the villages are small and mostly hidden from sight among embowering trees or in the hollow of a coombe. From the high ground in some places it is possible to gaze over many miles of surrounding country and not see a human habitation; hours may sometimes be passed in such a spot without a human figure appearing in the landscape.

The village I was staying at is called Willersey; the nearest to it, a little over a mile away, is Saintbury. This last was just such a pretty peaceful spot as would tempt a world-weary man to exclaim on first catching sight of it, "Here I could

wish to end my days." A little old-world village, set among trees in the sheltering hollow of a deep coombe, consisting of thatched stone cottages, grouped in a pretty disorder; a modest ale-house; a parsonage overgrown with ivy; and the old stone church, stained yellow and grey with lichen, its low square tower overtopped by the surrounding trees. It was a pleasure merely to sit idle, thinking of nothing, on the higher part of the green slope with that small centre of rustic life at my For many hours of each day it was strangely silent, the hours during which the men were away at a distance in the fields, the children shut up in school and the women in their cottages. sional bird voice alone broke the silencethe distant harsh call of a crow, or the sudden startled note of a magpie close at hand, a sound that resembles the broken or tremulous bleat of a kid. If an apple dropped from a tree in the village its thud would be audible from end to end of the little crooked street-in every cottage it would be known that an apple had dropped. On some days the sound of the threshing-machine would be heard a mile or two way; in that still atmosphere it was like the prolonged hum of some large fly magnified a million times. musical sound, buzzing or clear, at times tremulous, rising or falling at intervals, it would swell and fill the world, then grow faint and die away. This is one of the artificial sounds which, like distant chimes, harmonize with rural scenes.

Towards evening the children were all at play, their shrill cries and laughter sounding from all parts of the village. Then, when the sun had set and the landscape grew dim, they would begin to call to one another from all sides in imitation of the wood owl's hoot. During these autumn evenings the children at this spot appeared to drop naturally into the owl's note, just as in spring in all parts of England they take to mimicking the cuckoo's call. Children are like birds,

of a social and loquacious disposition in their fondness for a set call, a penetrative cry or note, by means of which they can converse at long distances. But they have no settled call of their own, no cry as distinctive as that of one of the lower animals. They mimic some natural sound. In the case of the children of these Midland villages it is the wood owl's clear prolonged note; and in every place where

some animal with a striking and imitable voice is found its call is used by them. Where no such sound is heard, as in large towns, they invent a call; that is, one invents it and the others ım mediately take it up. It is curious that the human species, in spite of its long wild life in the past, should have no distinctive call, or calls, universally understood. Among savage tribes the men often mimic the cry of some

wild animal as a call, just as our children do that of an owl by night, and of some diurnal species in the daytime. Other tribes have a call of their own, a shout or yell peculiar to the tribe; but it is not used instinctively, it is a mere symbol, and is artificial, like the long-drawn piercing coo-ee of the Australian colonists in the bush, and the abrupt Hi/with which we hail a cab, with other forms of hallooing; or even the lupine gurgled yowl of the morning milkman.

After dark the silence at the village was very profound until about half-past nine to ten o'clock, when the real owls, so easily to be distinguished from their human mockers, would begin their hooting—a single, long, uninflected note, and after it a silent interval of eight or ten seconds; then the succeeding longer, much more beautiful note, quavering at first, but growing steady and clear, with some slight

The Long-eared Owl.

modulation in it. The symbols hoo-hoo and towhit to-who, as Shakespeare wrote it, stand for the wood owl's note in books; but you cannot spell the sound of an oaten straw, nor of the owl's pipe. There is no 'w' in it, and no 'h' and no 't'. It suggests some wind instrument that resembles the human voice, but a very unenglish voiceperhaps the high-pitched somewhat nasal voice of an Arab intoning aprayer

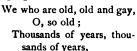
to Allah. One cannot hit on the precise instrument, there are so many; perhaps it is obsolete, and the owl was taught his song by lovers in the long ago, who wooed at twilight in a forgotten tongue,

And gave the soft winds a voice, With instruments of unremembered forms.

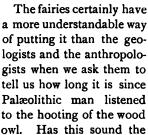
No, that cannot be; for the wood owl's music is doubtless older than any instrument made by hands to be blown by human lips. Listening by night to their concert, the many notes that come from

far and near, human-like, yet airy, delicate, mysterious, one could imagine that the sounds had a meaning and a message to us; that, like the fairy-folk in Mr. Yeats's

Celtic lyric, the singers were singing—



If all were told !





Tawny Owl.

same meaning for us that it had for him-the human being that did not walk erect, and smile, and look on heaven, but went with a stoop, looking on the earth? No, and yes. Standing alone under the great trees in the dark, still nights, the sound seems to increase the feeling of loneliness, to make the gloom deeper, the silence more profound. Turning our vision inward on such occasions, we are startled with a glimpse of the night-side of Nature in the soul; we have with us strange unexpected guests, fantastic beings that are in no way related to our lives; dead and buried since childhood, they have miraculously been restored to life. When we are back in the candlelight and firelight, and when the morrow dawns, these children of night and the unsubstantial appearance of things

Fade away Into the light of common day.

The villagers of Saintbury are, however, still in a somewhat primitive mental condition; the light of common day does not deliver them from the presence of phantoms, as the following instance will show.

Near Willersey there is a group of very

large old elm trees which is a favourite meeting-place of the owls, and one very dark starless night, about ten o'clock, I had been listening to them, and after they ceased hooting I remained for half an hour standing motionless in the same At length, in the direction of Saintbury, I heard the dull sound of heavy stumbling footsteps coming towards me over the rough, ridgy field. Nearer and nearer the man came, until, arriving at the hedge close to which I stood, he scrambled through, muttering maledictions on the thorns that scratched and tore him; then, catching sight of me at a distance of two or three yards, he started back and stood still, very much astonished at seeing a motionless human figure at that spot. I greeted him, and, to explain my presence, remarked that I had been listening to the owls.

"Owls!—listening to the owls!" he exclaimed, staring at me. After a while he added, "We have been having too much of the owls over at Saintbury." Had I heard, he asked, about the young woman who had dropped down dead a week or two ago, after hearing an owl hooting near

her cottage in the daytime? Well, the owl had been hooting again in the same tree, and no one knew who it was for and what to expect next. The village was in an excited state about it, and all the children had gathered near the tree and thrown stones into it, but the owl had stubbornly refused to come

That about the young

Little Owl.

woman he had spoken of is a queer little story to read in this enlightened land. She was apparently in very good health, a wife, and the mother of a small child; but a few weeks before her sudden death a strange thing occurred to trouble her mind. One

afternoon, when sitting in her cottage taking tea, she saw a cricket come in at the open door, and run straight into the middle of the room. There it remained motionless, and without stirring from her seat she took a few moist tea-leaves and threw them down near the welcome guest. The cricket moved up to the leaves, and when it touched them and appeared just about to begin sucking their moisture, to her dismay it turned aside, ran away out at the door, and disappeared. She informed all her neighbours of this startling occurrence, and sadly spoke of an aunt who was living at another village and was

known to be in bad health. "It must be for her," she said; "we'll soon be hearing bad news of her. I'm thinking." But no bad news came, and when she was beginning to believe that the strange cricket that had refused to remain in the house had proved a false prophet, the warning of the owl came to startle her

afresh. At noonday she heard it hooting in the great horse-chestnut overgrown with ivy that stands at the roadside, close to her cottage. The incident was discussed by the villagers with their usual solemnity and head-shakings, and now the young woman gave up all hopes of her sick aunt's recovery; for that one of her people was going to die was certain, and it could be no other than that ailing one. And, after all, the message and warning was for her and not the aunt. Not many days after the owl had hooted in broad daylight she dropped down dead in her cottage while engaged in some domestic work.

On the following morning I went with the friend I was visiting at Willersey to Saintbury, and the story heard overnight was confirmed. The owl had been hooting in the daytime in the same old horse-chestnut tree from which it had a short time ago foretold the young woman's death. One of the villagers, who was engaged in repairing the thatch of a cottage close to the tree, informed us that the owl's hooting had not troubled him in the least. Owls, he truly said, often hoot in the daytime during the autumn months, and he did not believe that it meant death for someone.

This sceptical fellow, it is hardly necessary to say, was a young man who

had spent a good deal of his time away from the village.

At Willersey, a Mr. Andrews, a lover of birds who owns a large garden and orchard in the village, gave me an entertaining account of a pet wood owl he once had. He had it as a young bird and never confined it. As a rule it spent most of the



The Barn Owl.

daylight hours in an apple loft, coming forth when the sun was low to fly about the grounds until it found him, when it would perch on his shoulder and spend the evening in his company. In one thing this owl differed from most pet birds which are allowed to have their liberty; he made no difference between the people of the house and those who were not of it; he would fly on to anybody's shoulder, although he only addressed his hunger-cry to those who were accustomed to feed him. As he roamed at will all over the place he became well known to everyone, and on account of his beauty and perfect confidence he grew to something of a village pet. But short days with long, dark evenings-and how

dark they can be in a small, tree-shaded, lampless village!--wrought a change in the public feeling about the owl. He was always abroad in the evening, gliding about unseen in the darkness on downy silent wings, and very suddenly dropping on to the shoulder of any person-man, woman, or child-who happened to be out of doors. Men would utter savage maledictions when they felt the demon claws suddenly clutch them; girls shrieked and fled to the nearest cottage, into which they would rush, palpitating with terror. Then there would be a laugh, for it was only the tame owl; but the same terror would be experienced on the next occasion, and young women and children were afraid to venture out after nightfall lest the ghostly creature with luminous eyes should pop down upon them.

At length, one morning the bird came not back from his night-wandering, and after two days and nights, during which he had not been seen, he was given up for lost. On the third day Mr. Andrews was in his orchard, when, happening to pass near a clump of bushes, he heard the

owl's note of recognition very faintly uttered. The poor bird had been in hiding at that spot the whole time, and when taken up was found to be in a very weak condition and to have one leg broken. No doubt one of the villagers on whose shoulders it had sought to alight, had struck it down with his stick and caused The bone was skilfully reits injury. paired and the bird tenderly cared for, and before long he was well again and strong as ever; but a change had come over his disposition. His confidence in his human fellow-creatures was gone; he now regarded them all-even those of the house-with suspicion, opening wide his eyes and drawing a little back when any person approached him. Never more did he alight on anyone's shoulder, though his evenings were spent as before in flying about the village. Insensibly his range widened and he became wilder. Human companionship, no longer pleasant, ceased to be necessary; and, at length, he found a mate who was willing to overlook his pauper past, and with her he went away to live his wild life.



THE PIRATES OF THE SOLENT.

THE NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE IN COMPANY WITH THE POET AND THE BOOKMAKER; CONTAINING THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT, AND SOME ACCOUNT OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES; WITH OTHER STRANGE AND IMPROBABLE ADVENTURES: EXTRACTED FROM THE LOG OF THE "FOLLY."

BY ALLEN UPWARD.

ILLUSTRATED BY THOS. DOWNEY.

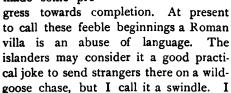
CHAPTER VI. - (Continued.)



OUGHT to mention here that we had been informed before coming to Brading that there was a Roman villa on the outskirts of the village. This turned out to

be a pure hoax. We saw a signboard up with the inscription "ROMAN VILLA," but on following up the trail we utterly failed to discover anything of the kind. We saw two or three bits of badly wrought

mosaic and some stone rubbish, in the corner of a field, which looked as though some speculative builder had started a Roman villa. Perhaps by the next time we visit the spot the building may have made some pro-



don't believe that any Roman ever lived in six yards of pavement and a dozen brickbats. I defy a Roman Catholic to do it.

The journey from Brading to Sandown Junction was short and uneventful. The unreflecting Bookmaker suffered a cruel disappointment on our arrival. Seeing the name of the station posted up in huge letters, as the train rolled in, he sprang excitedly to his feet.

"Look, look, men!" he cried in a voice broken with excess of joy. "We have got to good old Sandown! Bully for the steeplechases! What price the welter handicap? Who wants the odds? No more of your exploring, not for this child! I stop here!"

"Nonsense! Control yourself," I said sharply. "You are making yourself ridiculous, besides bringing discredit upon us. This is not the low, disreputable Sandown you are thinking of, but quite another place.

There is no horse-racing here, nothing of the kind is known here; it would shock the moral inhabitants of this place even to hear such a thing alluded to. Sit down—or rather, get out. We change here.



The Bookmaker sees the name "Sandown."

The Bookmaker's face underwent a sudden and fearful transformation.

"Well, ————," he commented.
"Of all the swindles I ever heard of, if this isn't the worst! Splice my spinnaker if it isn't!" Splice my spinnaker is the Bookmaker's idea of a good technical yachting swear. I have known men expelled from clubs for less.

After another pleasant wait we set out once more, this time in a train bound direct for Newport, and after a weary, but not dangerous, journey found ourselves in the stately metropolis. An interval for refreshments followed, and we then strolled through the streets and admired some of the principal buildings.

A friendly Jute was good enough to draw our attention to the church, which we duly gazed at, though the Bookmaker created some scandal by asking what it was for. I take this opportunity of stating, as a result of my investigations, that Christianity has obtained a foothold on the island, though a somewhat precarious one. The church at Newport, for instance, accommodates about 500 worshippers, while the population of the town is said to be about 10,000; ninety-five per cent. of the inhabitants therefore, I calculate, are still idolaters. I am in communication with the Foreign Missionary Society on the subject of further effort among them, but my letter has not yet received a reply. As we passed the Guild Hall I saw a notice up, announcing a meeting on behalf of the London City Mission. The thought of these benighted islanders contributing their shells and wampum for the benefit of the great capital of Christian civilisation touched me profoundly. The Bookmaker said it was like their cheek.

But we did not linger for any time in the neighbourhood of the Guild Hall. The Poet turned up his *Pleasure Visitor's Companion*, and read out a paragraph:—

"Here the magistrates of the whole

Island meet every Saturday for hearing and determining parochial questions or other petty causes, and for examining prisoners charged with felony, previous to their commitment for trial at the Winchester Sessions and Assizes. The County Court for the recovery of small debts through the Island is also held here."

After that we felt a bit depressed, and moved on. The ideas of George Brannon, Artist, on the subject of pleasure seemed to smack of eccentricity, not to say malevolence. I maintain that that was not the sort of paragraph to cheer three inoffensive men on a holiday. I have already said that this author had humour, but even humour should be in good taste. It was downright cold-blooded on George Brannon's part to add that "the Hall a few years ago received the addition of a new clock, at a cost of about £300." We did not care if that clock cost £3,000, or £3,000,000, or £3. We simply did not care one straw what the clock cost. were not in the humour for receiving pecuniary information about clocks. would be well if guide-books were a little less given to bursting into unnecessary and frivolous statistics, and showed a little more consideration for their readers' feelings.

It will be observed that George Brannon invariably spells the word island with a capital I. This is a custom of the Jutes when referring to their three fields and a cottage. They pretend that their island is the only island in the world, and that there are no such places as Sumatra and Australia and the Isle of Dogs.

The main object of our journey to Newport was yet to be achieved. As we came away with ruffled spirits from the Guild Hall I reminded my companions that we had to interview the Mayor.

"Why have we got to do that?" demanded the Bookmaker, whose mind is apt to work in a groove.

"Why? Because it is the correct, usual thing to do on these occasions," I retorted.

"When you discover savage countries you always interview the native chiefs."

"What do you want to interview him about?" the Bookmaker persisted.

"Oh, well—er—about the situation, you know."

"What situation?"

"Any situation," I answered recklessly.
"His situation. Our situation. The situation of the borough."

Here the Poet interposed.

"I understand all about interviewing; I have been interviewed myself, about my Whispers of the Moon," he said with dignity. "You can leave this business in my hands. I will conduct the interview."

"No, I'm darned if you do," returned the Bookmaker, who strongly resents the Poet's occasional attempts to put on literary side. "We're all in this thing together, and if there's any interviewing to be done, I mean to take a hand. I bet I can interview as well as you. Besides," he added after a thoughtful pause, "the old man may stand drinks."

The Poet and I exchanged startled glances. It was evident that the Bookmaker's knowledge on the subject of interviewing was more profound than we had supposed. The result of the conversation was to inspire him with an overweening and, as it turned out, a misplaced confidence in his own powers, which led him to assert himself in the interview almost to our exclusion. Had we foreseen exactly how it would be, I doubt if we should have cared to be present.

The name and address of the Mayor were easily ascertained. Alderman Thomas Snook, J.P., was his name, and he was a member of the hardware profession. We called first at his chambers in the High Street, but learning that he was at his private villa, we came away, purchasing a bradawl as a souvenir. The villa was soon reached, occupying the centre of a stately row on the outskirts of the town. It bore the designation of Blenheim House, and stood in its own

front garden containing upwards of a quarter of a perch of land.

"Do interviewers come to the front door, or the back?" enquired the Bookmaker, as we walked up to the gate.

I referred this nice point of etiquette to the Poet.

"I'm not quite sure," he admitted.

"There is only one door to my chambers.

But let us try the front. After all, we have nothing to be ashamed of."

I bit my lip, and repressed a retort which might have caused ill-feeling, as we walked up the drive, bordered by a fine avenue of marigolds. The Poet boldly rang the bell, and the door was presently opened by a singularly small servant-maid, in cap and apron. Before either of us could say a word the Bookmaker elbowed us aside, and constituted himself the spokesman of the party.

"Good afternoon, my dear," he said, encouragingly; "Mayor live here?"

"Yes, sir," the small maid answered, looking alarmed.

"Right, my dear!" He turned to us. "Come in, you chaps; we have struck the stable this time."

"S—sh! Ask if he's at home," I whispered.

The Bookmaker turned round.

"Governor in?"

"Y-yes, sir," stammered the little servant, evidently much frightened.

"It's all right," cried the Bookmaker to us, and he strode into the hall. "Now, my dear, go and tell him he's wanted; d'ye hear?"

"Yes, sir," said the trembling girl.
"Will you please to walk upstairs, gentlemen."

The Bookmaker wheeled round again. He appeared to suffer from the delusion that we had suddenly become deaf, and that it was necessary for him to repeat everything for our benefit in a deep rumbling growl, which must have been easily audible in every room in the villa.

"She says we're to go up. The old

buffer's in the drawing-room, I expect."

We had scarcely had time to take our bearings in the drawing-room when the Mayor entered. He was a solid-looking man, not very tall, but making up in beam what he lacked in length. head was bald above, but a fine grey beard swept over his manly chest. He wore a frock mainsail, rather short in the leach, a buff flannel foresail, and jibs of shepherd's plaid. A cable of solid gold issued from his port hawse-hole, and crossed the lower part of his cutwater. He gave a suspicious glance round as he came in, but the sight of my yachting suit instantly restored confidence. There is no surer passport anywhere on this island than a yachting suit. It is deemed to give assurance of boundless wealth, combined, of course, with spotless moral purity.

"Sit down, gentlemen," said the Mayor, courteously. "What can I do for you?"

We anchored ourselves on various chairs, the Bookmaker taking one opposite to the Mayor, on which he placed himself in the attitude of a horseman, facing the back. He then leant forward, holding up a monitory forefinger.

"Your name is Alderman Thomas Snook, and you are the Mayor of Newport," he commenced in professional style. I began to feel uncomfortable. It was evidently the Bookmaker's idea to conduct the interview on the lines of the examination of a witness in the police-court.

The Mayor seemed a little surprised. He bowed civilly, and the Bookmaker proceeded:

"I believe you carry on the business of an ironmonger in the High Street, Newport?"

"Yes; I do."

"Very good, go on; tell us about it."
The Mayor's face began to wear a

puzzled expression.

"I don't understand what you want me to tell you," he responded mildly.

"Tell us what you do. How do you ironmong?"

The Mayor started and began to gaze about him uneasily.

"Why do you ask me that?" he demanded.

"That is no answer to my question, sir," returned the Bookmaker, dropping into the tone by which it is intended to convey to the jury that the witness under examination is strongly suspected of a desire to commit perjury.

I saw it was time to interfere.

"My friend is a little abrupt," I said suavely, trying to reassure the startled functionary. "We ought to have begun by explaining that we have called to interview you."

The cloud on the Mayor's face disappeared and was replaced by a gratified smile.

"Pardon me, gentlemen, I didn't understand. This is an unexpected honour. May I ask what paper you represent?"

"No, no," I answered quickly; "we don't represent any paper. We are not mere common journalists. We are men of wealth and position, members, in fact, of an Inn of Court which shall be nameless. We are here in the interests of science. We have just discovered the Isle of Wight—"

"Ah!" The Mayor drew his chair back several inches and glanced nervously in the direction of the fire-irons. "Did anyone send you here?" he asked in a strained voice.

"No. Why?"

"Did no one tell you that I was on the Asylums Board?" He fixed his eye firmly on mine.

I stifled a groan. So this was what the Bookmaker's ridiculous behaviour had brought us to! I thought it best to ignore the innuendo.

"Certainly not," I said. "What has that to do with it? We are here to gather materials for a standard work on your island, a work by which your name wil



The Bookmaker conducts the interview.

be handed down to posterity. Am I to understand that you decline to assist us?"

The Mayor wavered. The look of uncertainty returned as he glanced from me to the Bookmaker. The latter seized the opportunity to renew his cross-examination. He took out his betting-book and pencil, and prepared to record the answers.

"Now, tell me," he said, "what age are you?"

"Really, sir, I"—the Bookmaker frowned fiercely—"well, I am fifty-five."

"Married or single?"

"Married." The answer came sullenly.

"Any kids?"

"Yes."

"How many; and what are their ages?"

"Really, I don't see why you should ask me such a question, and I don't understand this at all," protested his worship indignantly.

The Bookmaker turned to us.

"He declines to answer the question," he reported, as who should say—You see, gentlemen, the witness is hostile.

"I regret that we have troubled your worship," I said, glancing scornfully at the Bookmaker. "I wish to disassociate myself utterly from the manner in which this interview has been conducted. Here is my card, on which I have written the names of my banker and clergyman, and I can only hope that at some future time

my character may appear to you in a less

unfavourable light than I fear is the case

I rose to my feet, followed by the Poet.

at present."

With this dignified apology I withdrew, accompanied by the Poet. The Bookmaker gave chase, and overtook us in the hall. Over his language in the drive, and on the way to the station, I desire to draw a veil. Friendship has its limits. The circumstance that we found an escort of the borough police at the station, waiting to see us into the train, may be explained as an ordinary compliment paid to us as distinguished visitors; but it was an ambiguous one, and, on the whole, I felt that our visit to the capital of the island had not been an entire success.

VII.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE—THE MEMBER OF PARLIA-MENT—THE CULVERS—HARD LABOUR— SANDOWN—THE POET'S BOWER—WATER POLO—VISION OF SUDDEN DEATH— SHANKLIN—THE CHINE—A NEW KIND OF SPORT.

As soon as we were safe back in the shelter of our cabin, I took occasion to speak to the Bookmaker seriously. Among other things, I said:

"This is the last straw. If you choose to make yourself a target for the scorn and loathing of every right-minded person, you are at liberty to do so, but the Poet and I have characters which we value, and we object to share your infamy. have you behaved since you came on board this yawl? You have deliberately selected a garb which is simply an outrage on the feelings of respectable yachting men, your language is a nightmare, and your criminal recklessness has stirred up a mutiny. Now you have chosen to provoke and insult a great public functionary, the Mayor of Newport, one of the leading ironmongers on the island, and a man in every way your superior. Such conduct is without excuse. Recollect who and what you are. By courtesy you are described as Honourable—a hollow courtesy ofttimes, and never more so than in your case. If anything should happen to your elder brothers and their little boys you will one day be called upon to take part in legislating for your unfortunate country. Noblesse oblige! Let the thought of your high birth move you to lead a better and nobler life, and to do nothing which may render you unworthy of those responsible functions you may be called upon to discharge hereafter!"

At the end of my manly rebuke, which lasted many minutes, there was a dead silence. I looked round. The Bookmaker was slumbering like an infant. The Poet had meanly gone on deck. There are men in this world on whom

morality is wasted. They simply do not want to be any better.

I was glad when the Member of Parliament came on board the next day. I had invited him down in the hope that his example might do the others good. It didn't. The Member of Parliament was a gratifying contrast to them in every way. By his serious air it was easy to see that his high responsibilities weighed heavily upon his spirit, and that, while other men were giving their thoughts to regattas and such things, his earnest mind was grappling with great problems of State like the Housing of the Working Classes and the designs of Russia in the Far East. He was also a Welsh Nonconformist, and showed himself both shocked and pained when he found that we were not having family prayers regu-To ease his mind we larly in the cabin. allowed him to hold a little service on deck for the hands, but the only person who attended it was the Victim, and his attendance was compulsory. The Tyrant proved to be a bigoted adherent of the Establishment, and declined the ministrations of an uncertificated preacher.

"If I'm going into harbour I don't trust myself to no long-shore man; I want a ticketed pilot. And similar-like if I'm going to church I want a ticketed parson with his licence aboard," was his unanswerable argument. The Crew, usual, consulted the printed rules of his Union, and finding them silent on the subject of religion, announced that he should write to "Muster Wilson," and be guided by his decision. How that gentleman discharged this episcopal function I have no means of knowing, as the Member of Parliament left us before his reply was received. the Member of Parliament had formerly been concerned as counsel in prosecuting him on a charge of unlawful assembly, I think it likely that the reply was unfavourable.

We now roused ourselves to launch

forth from the calm waters of Bembridge Harbour, and continue our perilous voyage round the stormy shores of the Isle of Wight. By a singular coincidence, just as our arrival had taken place at a season of public mourning, so our departure synchronised with some public rejoicing, the occasion of which we failed to gather. A salute was fired from the Sailing Club, the vessels in the harbour decked themselves with bunting, and the church bells rang a merry peal. almost repented our resolution to depart, but when we showed signs of wavering several members of the crowd persuaded us to go.

They used stones.

Once outside the harbour, we drifted southward, carried by the tide as much as by the fitful breeze, past the sunken Ledge on which the sea was chopping in short waves, till we saw just out before us the tall Culver Cliff, the white eastern bastion of the isle, its outer wall rising up steeply through the water, parting the Channel like the prow of a white ship. We sailed so close into the land that we could see the glistening chalk below the water-line take a green tinge from the waves that rippled up to the forefoot of the cliff and foamed away again. Overhead the peak was bathed in seas of sunshine that washed every seam and wrinkle as white as fresh-hewn marble; and the soft surface of the chalk seemed to soak in the sunlight like a sponge. The summit of the headland was covered with a green cap of turf down to the brow, the grass as fresh as if the rain had just run off it, and ending at the very brink in a white wash of chalk dust, like the foam upon the green waves far below. And so the glorious cliff stood forth from the land and held commune with the sky and sea, like a stately kinsman of theirs, while round its face the white sea-birds screamed and flew, and the summer airs lulled themselves to sleep.

While I was gazing in a sort of languor-

ous ecstasy the Poet brought up the *Pleasure Visitor's Companion* and read out the glowing eloquence of George Brannon. Artist:—

"These far-seen and celebrated precipices, though greatly inferior in sublimity to the grander range of Freshwater, rank high in the proud characteristic scenery of our coast—the white cliffs of Albion / Rising at once from the sea almost perpendicularly to a sublime elevation, the face of the chalk being of the most dazzling whiteness, except where occasionally relieved by mantling samphire or on the more permanent slopes by the mellowing hand of time, they present a truly majestic aspect in either a tranquil or a tempestuous state of the weather."

There are only five mistakes in that description. The Culvers are not greatly inferior to Freshwater; the beauty of one cliff differs from the other as one star differs from another in glory; the western cliff is more striking, and the eastern more Neither is the whiteness of picturesque. the chalk dazzling; chalk is porous and does not refract the light sharply enough to dazzle; it is this soft sheen of the chalk, making the "white cliffs of Albion" loom like a land seen through a faint mist, which is the secret of their charm. Nor is the cliff mantled with samphire; there is not enough samphire to mantle, there are only a few patches here and there. Again, there aren't any more permanent slopes, one slope is just as permanent as the others, and besides there are no slopes to speak of, the face is almost perpendicular, as the author himself has remarked at the beginning of the sentence. Lastly, the hand of time does not mellow either on the more permanent slopes or on the more evanescent slopes. There is no such thing as a mellowing hand. Hands do Whether the observation at not mellow. the end is right I am not able to say; when we came by, the weather was not tempestuous, so that I had no means of checking the statement.

Apart from these few trifling slips, the description is a very good description as such things go, and rather like the *Stones* of *Venice*.

Unfortunately the wind died away altogether just as we got round the point, and the tide began to set against us. The Tyrant thereupon ordered the Crew and the Victim to get into the dinghy and tow us into Sandown. I thought it



Towing the yacht.

a rather undignified way of approaching a strange port myself, but the Tyrant assured us it was permitted by yachting etiquette. I believed it gratified his cruel instincts to stand in the bows and shout orders at the luckless rowers as they toiled away under the blazing sun, making about a knot an hour.

"Now then, pull away! Let her have it! Put your back into it!" he sang out cheerfully, while the poor Victim clung limply to his oar, and the Crew, down whose flushed face the perspiration was streaming, glared sullenly up at his commander.

So pleased did the Tyrant become with the situation that he began to indulge in jest and sarcasm.

"Go on, there! You don't want a rest! Where's your muscle?" he shouted. "Make her move a bit, can't you?"

"We can't go no faster nor we are going," returned the Crew sullenly. "You come and try it yourself."

"I'm all right where I am, thankye," the Tyrant retorted with a grim smile. "You just lay into it, and don't grumble. You wants a little exercise to do you good. Look at the boy; he don't complain."

"He'd complain fast enough if he 'ad any spirit. He's about dead beat, that's what he is."

"No he ain't. He's just enjoying himself, like you would if you warn't so lazy. Ain't you, Jim?"

The wretched boy, thus placed between two fires, preserved a prudent silence. But the expression on his countenance was more eloquent than mere verbiage could have been.

After we had gone some distance the Poet was seized with a sudden fit of energy, and volunteered to take a spell in the dinghy. Roused to emulation the Bookmaker undertook to share his labour, and they got into the boat. A difference of opinion instantly arose as to which was to row stroke. They tossed up for it, and the Poet won.

This was unfortunate, because they at once commenced trying which could pull the other round, and the Bookmaker's superior reach, aided by the leverage of his position in the boat, gave the Poet no chance.

"Look out what you're doing," he exclaimed, as a vicious pull by the bow oar brought the dinghy broadside on to the yacht.

"You should pull harder then," was

"How can I when you don't keep time?" snapped the stroke.

A minute's steady rowing followed, and then the wrangle recommenced.

"Pull properly, can't you?"

"I am pulling properly."

"No you're not. You keep jabbing me in the back."

"Don't fudge then."

"I'm not fudging. It's you are not keeping stroke."



"No one could with a man like you. You don't know how to row."

"I can row a darn sight better than you. Look out!"

The bow had silently replied to this last assertion by pulling the boat half round again.

The next moment the stroke, attempting a tremendous spurt, caught a crab, and came down heavily in the bow's lap.

"Look out yourself! You're a pretty oarsman! Where's your oar?"

A thrill of horror swept the deck of the Folly as we perceived that the Poet had let his oar drop overboard, and it had drifted beyond his reach. But it was in such supreme moments that the Tyrant nobly redeemed his failings. Snatching up a boat-hook he rushed to the yawl's stern and rescued the dripping oar as it came past. We were saved.

I now thought it time to assert my authority and order the others on board.

"Get out of that dinghy," I said, "both of you. I will take the oars and show you how to row."

They obeyed with almost servile readiness. The whole time they had been rowing they had towed the yacht about a dozen yards.

I got in, bent my back to the work, and sculled away like a giant. The other men came into the bows to look at me, and made remarks which bordered on familiarity.

"Doesn't he look red? I say, would you like a drink? No hurry, old chap, take your time! Look out you don't break the oars! Isn't he feathering gracefully? If you splash much more, old man, you'll swamp the boat."

My only response to their well-meant attempts at mirth was to redouble my exertions. I firmly believe that I broke a blood vessel, and I am certain my heart has never been right since. While I was straining every nerve, and stretching the tow-rope to its utmost, my attention was presently arrested by the curious behaviour

of a piece of seaweed which seemed to be chasing the dinghy and gradually overtaking it. Just then I glanced up and caught sight of the Tyrant's face, which wore a troubled, anxious look, as he sat on the bowsprit watching me.

"Is anything the matter?" I called out. The Tyrant heaved a sigh.

"We'm drifting back a bit, sir!"

" Dah !"

Two hours later we brought up off Sandown Pier, and anchored for the night. The Tyrant and the Crew, who had pulled us in, said they were tired. I have no doubt it was true.

Sandown is perhaps the least attractive place on the island, the Local Board, with that sagacity peculiar to public bodies in this country, having taken away the beach, and replaced it by a glaring white pavement which it is certain blindness to walk upon. Nevertheless, these drawbacks are redeemed by the fact that this is one of the only two places in the British Isles where it is possible to have a cup of tea out of doors. Every year thousands of Englishmen go to foreign parts solely in order to do this. They would rather stay and do it in their own country, but they are not allowed. The restaurant-keepers of England have banded together to put down the practice, and the Local Boards have nobly backed them up. I have searched the whole south coast in vain for a single other place in which refreshments can be taken in the open air. In Torquay, for instance, there are piers, and gardens, and bands, but if you want a cup of tea you have to withdraw into a marble vault called a Creamery and consume it in solitude and darkness as if it were a crime.

The Poet was the first to discover this festive attraction. The moment we touched land we lost sight of him, but on walking down the esplanade after dinner, we perceived him in a trellised bower dispensing ices and coffee to a perfect swarm of charmers, chiefest among whom was the Widow. The Poet blushed and

turned away his head as we drew near, but seeing that it was a public place we walked in boldly and seated ourselves at the next table. The Poet's hand being thus forced, he had to introduce us, and the Bookmaker and I entered into a fierce rivalry for the Widow's favour. Luckily th. Member of Parliament had found a ten-lined whip waiting for him at the Post Office, and been obliged to rush off by



The Coroner is dictatorial.

train to save the Government from destruction, or to destroy it, I forget which; but I hope he did it, whatever it was, as he seemed to think it important.

I find that I don't get very excited about politics when I am on a yacht. is difficult to work up much real fervour about that kind of thing in the absence of the daily papers. When I get my Standard and learn that the Church of England is in deadly peril, or my Daily News and ascertain that our Board Schools are being insidiously undermined, I worry over those things so that I can't sleep. But when I am out on the blue salt waves. dozing over the vessel's side, while the old ivied church towers rise up along the land, and the Victim, fresh from his fifth standard, puts his expensive State-paid education to use in following the sensational career of Frank Reade, Junior, as set forth by the Aldine Press, I sink into a state of utter and callous indifference; and if there were a general election

raging on the island I should not go ashore to vote.

The principal amusement of the aborigines on this coast is a game called water polo. It is played in the sea with a football, and would be exactly like football if it were not called polo. Two wooden bars with uprights are moored in deep water to serve as goals; then the two sides are rowed out in boats, the ball is chucked in between them, and they dive in all together and make for it. The game lasts for about twenty minutes, and is less easy than it looks, even to a good swimmer. I can prove this.

The first day after our arrival I witnessed one of these matches, town against visitors, and thinking the game looked cool and pleasant, I mentioned to a few people about on the esplanade that I was a good swimmer. The next morning on going ashore I was met, to my surprise, by a large deputation, including several members of the Local Board, the leading bathing-machine proprietors, a couple of policemen in plain clothes, and the Coroner of the island, who earnestly pressed me to take part in a game to be played that afternoon.

Flattered though I was by the invitation, I did not at once give my consent. The fact is that, though a good swimmer—my movements in the water have been compared to those of the porpoise by judges—I am not a long swimmer. In smooth water I can swim about a dozen yards easily and gracefully, but after that I begin to drown. I therefore temporised.

"Gentlemen," I said, "I should like to oblige you, but it is so long since I have played the game that I am quite out of practice. Besides, I have noticed that the costumes worn by the players are rather scanty; I am not sure that I should care to expose myself to the gaze of the females on the pier in such a garb. But I tell you what I will do; after the game is over I will give an

exhibition of fancy swimming, including my celebrated feat of floating on my back while repeating Jack Robinson aloud, on behalf of your funds."

But this counter-proposal was rejected almost with rudeness. The Coroner, whose manner struck me as particularly harsh and dictatorial—I did not then know that on this island the objectionable system prevails of paying the Coroner by fees,—stamped his foot and exclaimed:

"No, sir, we insist on your playing in the match. We know who you are. You are the person who has given out that he has come to discover the Isle of Wight. You have referred to its inhabitants as aborigines and Jutes. The question is whether you are now afraid to meet those Jutes and aborigines in a contest of athletic skill or not?"

Stung by his bullying demeanour, I rashly gave the required pledge, and the deputation, all except the two plain-clothes men, withdrew.

Meeting the Poet and Bookmaker some time afterwards I told them carelessly:

"I say, you fellows, I am going to play water polo this afternoon."

I had expected them to show envy, perhaps to assail me with coarse mockery. Instead of that they reeled as if they had received a sudden shock, and then gazed at me with looks in which horror seemed to struggle with compassion.

"Is this really true, old man?" the Bookmaker asked, with a strange yearning tenderness in his voice.

"Of course it is, or I shouldn't have told you so. You ought to know me by this time."

"Yes, yes, of course we know you, but—well, no matter." He turned to the Poet, repeating in a subdued whisper, "It's true!"

"Poor fellow!" murmured the Poet softly. "But there is time to make your will," he remarked, in a more business-like tone.

"Nonsense!" I said angrily. "Why should I make my will?"

"We should have liked some little memento of you," said the Bookmaker, with an affectionate glance at my carbuncle shirt-pin. "Some little personal token to remind us of the happy hours that we have spent together."

"I will draw it up for you, if you like," threw in the Poet. "To a brother member of the profession my charge is only half a guinea—paid in advance."

"What rubbish! I shall do nothing of the sort. You must be fools."

The Bookmaker's only response was to draw out his pocket handkerchief and pass it furtively across his eyes. The Poet, who seemed to bear up much better, questioned me again:

"Have you insured your life?"

"No, I haven't."

"Then, as a gentleman, I shall expect



1 announce that I am going to play water polo.

you to make a deposit sufficient to cover your share of the expenses of the yawl to the end of the month," he said sharply.

"I shall do nothing of the kind."

"Then if you, a man who swims worse than an oyster-shell, intend to go and play water polo, leaving us to pay for the yacht, I take it that you do not wish to be considered a gentleman?"

I drew myself up.

"As a barrister-at-law I believe I am technically an esquire, which is a higher rank than that of gentleman," I replied with hauteur. "As to whether I am a gentleman in your sense of the word, I suppose I must be judged by the company I keep, and having regard to the circumstances in which I find myself, I admit the question is open to discussion."

With this bitter sneer I turned and left

them, to take my part in the approaching ordeal.

As soon as I had donned the objectionable garprovided ments for me, I got into a boat with seven others. which seemed to me a dangerous load, and we were rowed out to our goal. There was a nasty chopping sea, and the cold

wind chilled me to the marrow as I sat waiting for the signal to dive in. At last it was given, and I took a graceful header into the water, barking my shins in doing so against the gunwale of the boat.

I thought I was going straight to the bottom, but at length I emerged upon the surface, spluttering and gasping for breath, and found myself the centre of a struggling throng of swimmers, all of whom apparently were benton drowning me. By dint of great exertion I managed to get out of their way; but my respite was a brief one. Suddenly I saw the ball descend on the water just in front of my face with a splash that nearly blinded me. Clutching at its slippery surface I managed to push the thing away, amid loud cries of "Off-side!" At the same instant a ruffian belonging to the other side sprang upon my shoulders from behind, and I went down like a stone.

In that moment the memory of all the

sins I had ever committed did not flash through my mind, only the sins of the people who wrote the books that say drowning is an easy death, and I wished I had one of them under the water with me with his book tied round his neck. How much salt water I swallowed I can only guess; judging by the amount of Christian drink it took to dilute it afterwards I should say enough to fill a

whiskey bottle and a couple of siphons. I rose to the surface at last hopelessly waterlogged, and, clutching at the oar of a friendly boat that was hovering near, implored the boatman to take me ashore.

It turned out to be the boatman who had brought us out, and who

had kept me in view from the first in hopes of salvage. He now helped me to climb into the boat, a proceeding which presents great difficulties to the beginner, and I lay down in the bottom like a dying flounder, while he rowed to the bathingmachine where I had dressed. As we passed under the pier I looked up and beheld the Widow gazing down upon me between the Bookmaker and the Poet, whose faces wore a curious, disappointed look. In that moment, while I was trying to conceal myself beneath the thwarts, I heard a murmur of compassion pass through the crowd that surrounded them: "Poor fellow, he has got the cramp!"

Honour was saved!

My first impulse on getting into the boat had been to endow my deliverer with all my worldly goods. By the time I had regained the bathing machine I



The Poet, the Widow, and the Bookmaker gaze at me from the pier.

judged that a ten-pound note would be a sufficient reward. The process of drying myself brought further reflection, and I decided to give the man a sovereign. Finally, I dressed and came out, and finding the man outside, offered him half a crown with words of grateful benison.

He took it, lodged it carefully in his pocket, and then, scrutinising me thoughtfully from head to heel, observed:

"Well, I should ha' thought you was worth half a sovering, guv'nor."

I felt the justice of his remark and paid up.

But I had my revenge on the other two. I went straight on board the Folly, bade the Tyrant hoist the anchor, and sailed off for Shanklin, leaving them to follow by land, a long and tedious tramp of two miles across the yielding sands. I understand that their faces when they first looked for the Folly and found it gone were fitting subjects for the photographer's art.

I shall never visit Sandown again. Her Bay is fair to the eye, the smooth waters smile deceitfully in the sunshine; but I have faced the grisly spectre that lurks underneath that treacherous surface, and I am going to give up water polo and take to marbles.

Shanklin lies upon the western side of the Bay. It is prettier and more aristocratic than Sandown, several of the natives keeping carriages. There is also a select club to which visitors are admitted on payment of 10s. We were informed that it was very nice inside. George Brannon, Artist, says that Shanklin contains 4,000 inhabitants, but we hadn't time to count them during our brief stay, so that I was unable to check his figures.

Most of the town stands on the top of the cliff, which is here a reddish sand colour; but there is a delightful row of houses along the foot, including one which at first sight we took to be a conservatory, but which turned out on closer inspection to be a hotel where liquid refreshment could be procured. From this row the top of the cliff may be reached by means of a lift, which I understood to be the property of a brother *litterateur*. The Poet presumed on this circumstance to try and go in free.

"It's all right," he said airly to the man who stood by the turnstile at the receipt of pence. "I am a poet. No doubt Sir George Newnes is familiar with my Sighs to Semibreves."

The man shook his head.

"I don't know nothing about that, sir. If you wants to use the lift you must pay a penny."

"What!" exclaimed the Poet theatrically. "Do you mean to say that poets are not admitted free?"

"Certainly not," said the man sharply.
"Poets pays a penny each just the same as the rest."

"And this is fame! This is the treatment which the world metes out to genius!" moaned the Poet, as he reluctantly turned away to walk up by the path.

We had not been long at Shanklin before we discovered the celebrated Chine,
which speedily became our favourite
haunt. This Chine is a delightful oldfashioned hostelry situated at the foot
of a romantic gorge filled with trees and
ferns, down which in wet weather there
trickles a tiny rill. There is a terrace in
front of the inn overlooking the gorge
and the sea beyond, but the seats on this
terrace have been artfully put facing the
house lest the attention of visitors should
be distracted from their refreshments by
the scenery.

The Chine is chiefly celebrated for its cakes, which are round and flat and contain currants. These cakes may be put to several uses, their shape rendering them suitable to play bowls with, while they are large enough to make serviceable cushions. Boys are said to eat them with relish. As the weather affects them but

slightly I can recommend them to Yacht Provision Stores.

We used them chiefly as bait. The Chine is infested with a breed of ferocious birds, great fat white fellows with swelling breasts and pink bills, known, I believe, to naturalists as doves or pigeons. These doves appear to nest in the branches of the surrounding trees, whence they descend, like the harpies in the third Æneid, upon the food of the traveller. They seem particularly partial to the Chine cakes—it is likely they have a strain of ostrich.

The first time we visited the Chine, the handmaiden on duty, true to the traditions of the British restaurateur, wanted us to go into a species of wooden pavilion to have our tea. Against this insidious proposal we rebelled successfully, and had it outside on the terrace. This was the doves' opportunity, and they came round us in swarms, almost pecking our fingers in their greedy scramble for the crumbs. Presently a brilliant idea occurred to us-I think it was the Bookmaker who originated it. Throwing a series of crumbs along the ground, each one a little farther on than the one before, we lured the unsuspecting birds up to the open door of the pavilion. A few final pieces were hurled inside, and several doves promptly followed. while, the Poet had arisen stealthily from his seat and edged his way with cat-like tread in the wake of the unfortunate birds, and no sooner were they inside than he swiftly closed the door, caging them inside. Scarcely had he returned to his seat when the girl came out on some errand, noticed that the door of the pavilion was shut, walked across, and opened it to see if anyone had gone in. Immediately the doves flew out violently against her, nearly knocking her down. She gave a great gasp of surprise, and we heard her ejaculate to herself, "How did those pigeons get in?" She looked round the pavilion, went inside, and presently we

heard her close a window. Then she came out looking satisfied and returned into the house.

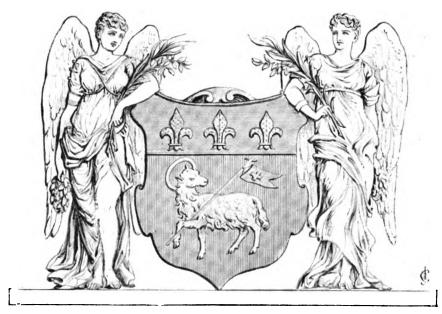
The moment she was gone the Bookmaker got up, strolled across to the pavilion and opened the door wide again. Then the sport recommenced. A fresh trail of crumbs was laid, and half a dozen bloated doves were tempted gradually up to the doorway. It was exciting work, and when one of the Bookmaker's crumbs fell short and lured a dove out again instead of farther in a hollow groan burst from us in chorus. the wretched doves let their greediness overcome their prudence and trooped in after a specially large chunk of cake. an instant the Poet was on his feet and gliding like a serpent to the fatal doorway. Just as he reached it one of the doves happened to put its head out, saw the enemy, gave an astonished and mortified cough, and flew out over his head. It was a sickening disappointment, for he was the plumpest of the lot, but his companions were successfully trapped, and the Poet lounged back unconcernedly to his seat.

Presently the girl came out again. This time she had evidently been sent to fetch something out of the pavilion, for she walked straight across to the door. As she approached it there was a weird sound of flapping wings and that kind of strangled whooping-cough which the late Lord Tennyson described as "the moan of doves." A scared look came over the girl's face; she hastily turned the handle of the door, and five frantic doves dashed themselves in her face like whirling shuttlecocks.

"Lord ha' mercy!" we heard her exclaim, as she stared blankly round the closed pavilion. "How did those pigeons get in!"

Then we were obliged to go.

The Bookmaker said he had never had better sport in his life, and the only drawback was that there was no money on.



The Arms of the City of Rouen.
(From a drawing by Jane E. Cook.)

OLD WORLD CITIES—ROUEN.*

BY THEODORE ANDREA COOK.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. JAMES.

PART II.

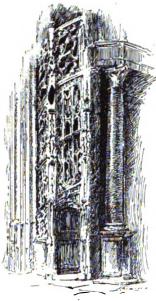
ROUEN that is now chef-lieu du département de la Seine Inféricure
was once the Norman stronghold which
commanded all the basin of the river from
the incoming of the stream of Eure. The
Seine and its tributaries have cut vast
plateaux some four hundred feet in height
through the chalk and débris piled above
the Jurassic bedrock that crops out here
and there, as it does at Bray. On the
right bank of the river, at the summit of
its huge curve, the city lies between the
valley of Darnétal, that is watered by
Robec and his mate Aubette, and the
valley of Bapaume.

This position on the outside of the river's curve is one of extraordinary natural strength. The inside, which seems more probable at first, would have left the town defenceless. Even to-day you can only get into Rouen, as into a town that

has been battered and taken by assault, through the breach in her fortified lines. If you enter by the railway from Paris, from Havre, from Dieppe, or from Fécamp, it is by subterranean tunnels only that approach is possible, and up a flight of steps that you make your first acquaintance with a lost corner of the town, a corner without character and without size, without the least promise of the beauty that is hidden farther off. Of all those great gates through which the mediæval city welcomed her Dukes or sallied out against her enemies, but one is left, the Porte Guillaume Lion close by the Quays, at the end of the Rue des Arpents, which is as faded and decrepit as its entrance. The men to whom they were opened had often travelled far.

From the days when Northern rovers sailed here, when Guiscard's colonists

went out to Sicily, when traders watched the wind for England, the citizens of Rouen have had their interests far afield. In the twelfth century this characteristic



Staircase to the organ-lost in St. Maclou.

was already expressed in grandiloquent hexameters:—

"Tu Rogere potens, tu maxima gloria regum Subditur Italia et

Subditur Italia et Siculus, tibi subditur Ager

Grecia te timet et Syria et te Persa veretur Ethiopes albi Ger-

mania nigra . ."

The ardent scribe seems indeed to have used every geographical expression within his knowledge which would scan. But if a

somewhat pardonable exaggeration may be admitted at that time, the verses with which Martin le Mesgissier dedicates his History in 1578 are much nearer truth, and poetry as well:—

"Cette mère féconde,"

he cries to his native Rouen.

"Dedant de rois et ducs semés par tout le monde,

Naples, Pouille, Sicile ont connu mes Richards,

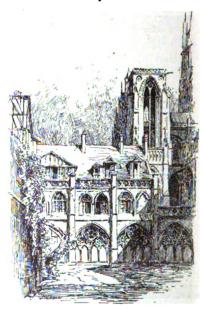
Mes Guillaumes vaillants, mes Robers et Guichars,

Rogers et Bohémons et encor à cest heure Le riche sceptre Anglois en ma race demeure."

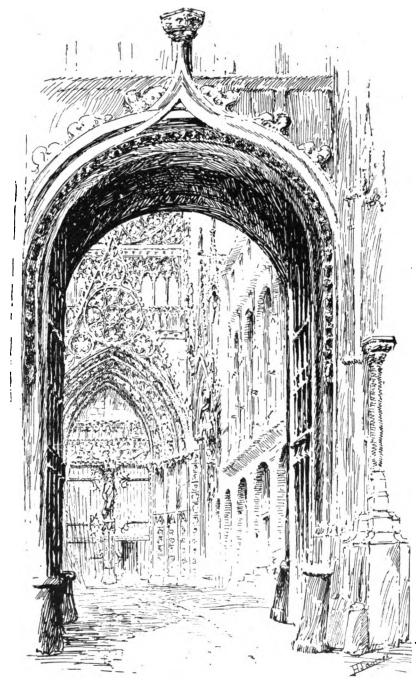
And every citizen was proud of these wanderers over seas from Normandy.

But it is the story of their home-town only that I have to suggest here; and we shall not lose much by this circumscribing of our purpose. The life of Normandy was concentrated in its capital. The slow march of events from the independence as a Duchy to the incorporation as a part of France has stamped its footprints upon the thoroughfares of the town. The development of mediæval Rotomagus into modern Rouen has left its traces on the stones of the city, as the falling tide leaves its own mark upon the timbers of a sea-worn pier.

Of its municipal buildings and private houses I have already spoken. It remains to suggest some little of the meaning of its Cathedral and the numberless other religious monuments which form the only chain between the Past and Present whose best links still remain. It is by one of these that Rouen is connected with the antiquity of Roman occupation. In the Crypte St. Gervais, which we have visited already, the early Saints who followed the legions from across the Alps held their first sincere and simple rites. The Church of St. Julien is another of those sanctuaries without the gates which saw the infant Rouen rise out of its swaddling clothes and become a city walled about with



Cour de l'Albane. (North-west corner of the Cathedral.



NORTH TRANSEPT DOOR, ROUEN CATHEDRAL.

(Called " Portail des Libraires.)

strength. This perfect little example of Norman architecture is the last relic of a Convent which was built by an English king for the reception of ladies of royal or noble blood afflicted with leprosy. Normandy is strangely deficient, it will be

seen, in fine specimens of that style of architecture to which the province has given its name. It is in England only that the traveller sees such magnificent types of the round-arched, thick-walled building as Durham Cathedral, or the countless feudal keeps which still stand "lichengilded like a rock" as everlasting as the rock on which they have been founded. In the capital of Normandy there is hardly a single monument that recalls the art with which the most famous of its Dukes are most closely associated.

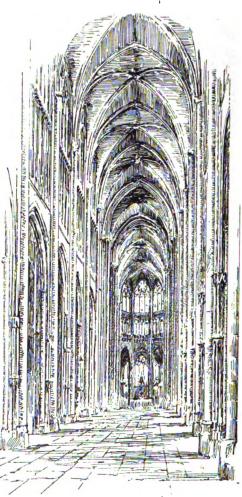
St. Julien is in the Rue de l'Hospice in Petit Quévilly, a suburb of

Rouen on the opposite side of the river beyond St. Sever. Round the apse and nave, beneath the roof on the outside of the walls, the corbels are carved with the hairy bearded heads of conquered Franks and Saxons, as was so often done by the clean-shaved Norm in workmen, who found the subjects of ridicule or terror proper

to the grotesque gargoyle in the derided countenances of the foes they had so often vanquished. They had no need to imagine shapes of fear, as the thirteenth century Gothic carver was so fond of doing. A small arcade of engaged colon-

nettes goes right round the whole interior of the church between its larger pillars; the capitals are roughly carved. and the round arches moulded in the usual conventional angular pattern. A tablet on the south wall records the restoration of this century twelfth building by M. Guillaume Lecomte. It is a most careful and conscientious piece of work, and is now very justly classed among the best of the " Monuments Historiques " In Normandy. the vault above the choir are frescoes which bv some authorities are considered to contemporabe neous with the building, and in

among the best of the "Monuments Historiques" in Normandy. In the vault above the choir are frescoes which by some authorities are considered to be contemporaneous with the building, and in any case they are of the highest interest, representing such scenes as the Annunciation, the Wise Men, the Flight into Egypt, and the like. The name of the "Chartreux," which is often given to this little church, dates only from comparatively recent times, and arose from the fact tha when the army of Henri IV. wrecked the



Nave of St. Ouen.

Monastery of the Chartreux on the Mont Ste. Catherine above the town, the monks came here and were joined by the other community of monks from the Chartreux in that monastery which our own Henry V. made his headquarters during the English occupation, called distinctively the Chartreuse de la Rose.

Curiously enough one of the few other remains of "Norman" architecture is also outside the walls, and also was used for lepers. It is the church upon the Mont aux Malades, the hill on the exactly opposite side of the town, above St. Gervais. This church, too, was built by Henry Plantagenet, who dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury the walls which his chamberlain, Roscelin, had begun. The third "Norman" church is the little Chapel of St. Paul, which is now used as the vestry of the new building on the north side of the Seine, opposite the Côte Ste. Catherine. The same corbels carved with hairy faces are placed outside its apse as we noticed at St. Julien. I have spoken at some length of these churches, not only because they are rare examples of the style which the traveller would most naturally expect to find in Rouen, but also because all three are buildings which will most' probably escape his notice altogether unless he is especially directed to their situation.

With the numerous examples of Gothic work it is different. The town is so full of them that he cannot help seeing and appreciating the beauty of well-nigh every one. The three which Miss James has drawn for this article are typical of the rest, and are the finest in Normandy. Any one of these three would have sufficed to make any town in Europe famous. Each of them is so well known that I need hardly say anything in this place of the Cathedral, of the Abbey of St. Ouen, of the Church of St. Maclou. For the moment their chief value is that on their walls and in their monuments is preserved the record of a people's growth from nothingness into the strength and riches of to-day. It may be well shortly to trace that story here.

Out of the mists of an unknown antiquity, in which you distinguish vaguely here and there the few poor huts of a savage people, the few rude cabins of some hungry fishermen, among the reed-beds of the swamp, the first foundations of a solid permanence arose when the Romans made Rotomagus a military station, to guard the approach by river to Lutetia. The legions left it, but the imprint of their iron heels remained. They did the work of organisation which they have done for so many towns of Europe; they left the hall-mark of their approval, and they went away. But nowhere has their judgment been found wanting. And in Rouen survives the oldest religious monument on this side of the Alps, the crypt built by those early Christians whose presence and worship were made possible by the vanished power of dead Emperors and forgotten The tragedy of the Merovingians followed, black as with the doom of the Atridæ, and it is not till past the middle of the eighth century that history, as we can believe it from the proofs we recognise, really began. In 769 Charlemagne celebrated his Easter in the Cathedral.

Soon afterwards came the first rush of the pirates from the North. Their long ships swept up the current of the Seine. and by one invasion after another they kept their hold on Rouen and its surrounding territory until the Norman Dukes became a settled dynasty in territories of their own which a French King was but too glad to give them as the price of peace in other parts of his dominions. Here died the greatest of the Dukes of Normandy whom Rouen knew, William the Conqueror, at the monastery which had risen above the old crypt of St. Gervais: and here was born the son who was to inherit the dignity of a prince in the kingdom beyond seas as well as in the Duchy on the mainland.

Adaptability was a great characteristic of the Norman blood; and it assimilated with the kindred strain of England so

Duke of Paris by degrees grew greater until at last he absorbed into the one kingdom of united France the Duchy that had sent its best strength across the channel. In 1264 when St. Louis came



The Apse of St. Ouen from the Hotel de Ville Gardens.

completely that its independent hold upon Frenchsoilgrewgradually weaker. Though for a short and brilliant period the Empire of the Angevins stretched from Spain to Scotland its elements were too dissimilar for a long union to be possible. The to hear the Christmas Mass at Rouen, he heard it in his own Cathedral amid the kneeling ranks of his own subjects. The castle that the French kings built to hold the town has but one tower left, and that suggests at once the next—and perhaps

the darkest—chapter in the history of Rouen, the invasion of the English. After a long and bitter siege the town was held by the invading army for thirty years. Another citadel was built to hold the garrison of another conqueror, and the foreign occupation did not cease until the stones of Rouen had been stained with a crime that is indelible and a shame that can never be forgiven, whether to French or English who participated. In 1431 Joan of Arc was burnt on the Place du Vieux Marché, within a stone's-throw of the Hôtel Bourgtheroulde, though not on the spot where the hideous modern fountain unworthily commemorates the martyrdom of the Maid of Orleans.

In 1449, upon a tenth of November, Charles VII. made a splendid entry into the Rouen that was at last a French city again. With him were René d'Anjou, King of Sicily, Pierre de Brézé, and Jacques Cœur, whose house is still at Bourges to keep alive the fame and good repute of one of the earliest and best of France's merchant princes. It was some fifty years afterwards, at the end of that great fifteenth century, that Louis XII. raised the old Échiquier de Normandie to the dignity of a Sovereign Court, and built for its reception the great Palais de Justice, which remains as one of the most beautiful monuments which that creative age has left us. By Francis I., the style and title of Parliament of Normandy was bestowed upon its Court of Justice, and a history began, in fitting dignity, which is still unfinished. From now onwards were built all those greatest houses which remain as the chief glory of the town. They were in the freshness of their early beauty when Henri II. entered into his good city of Rouen in 1550. The colours were still brilliant upon wall and ceiling, the delicate tracery upon roof and turret still crisp and clear from the last touches of the sculptor's chisel, the carvings of men and beasts and angels still perfect and unmutilated either by time or

fanaticism or ignorance. As he swept through the gaily decorated streets, followed by a pageantry of elephants and cars, and greeted by symbolic masques and throngs of singing children, Queen Catherine de Medicis was by his side with Mary Stuart, still a child, and Marguerite de France, with her friend the beautiful Duchesse de Guise. As Pierre Grognet sang in 1533—

"Les gens de Rouen sont honnêtes, Grans entrepreneurs d'edifices De theatres et artifices Es entrees des grans seigneurs, Roy prelatz et aultres greigneurs."

But the Court itself provided what was perhaps the most amusing fête of all. In the stronghold of lawyers, and the most magnificent of the new law courts not long erected, the opportunity was too good to be missed. The King's jester, Bousquet, arranged a legal comedy for them, appropriate to the town where every citizen valued the privileges of his freedom only less than the amusement of perpetual litigation. The "Chats-fourrés" of Rabelais had never such a happy hunting-ground as in the Palais de Justice of Rouen, and there is a tale that shall be told in its right place of a typical case decided there, which helped, as much as anything, to fix their characteristic love of legal quibbling as a national trait on every citizen of Rouen.

Scarce twelve years after the pomp and pageantry of this royal entry the streets were filled with a very different crowd. For some time Parliament had been pitilessly burning and executing the "heretics" of the new reformed religion, and at last, in April, 1562, the harassed Huguenots revolted with all the fury which their Catholic persecutors had taught them was appropriate to theological discussion. They broke into convents, they sacked the churches, they hammered statues into pieces, they broke priceless stained glass windows into fragments, and for six months

they rioted over their oppressors. Then Charles IX. came down upon the town with all the strength of his trained forces, avenged with hideous tortures the excesses of the Huguenots, and left the place a heap of smoking ruins, in which only the best of the old houses survived. The

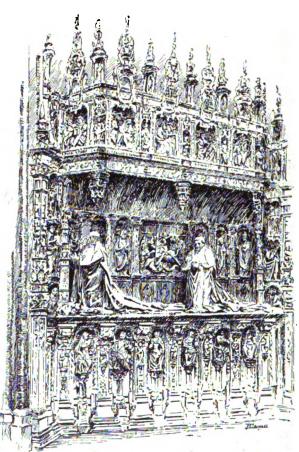
horrors of the Religious Wars continued. In 1588, after the "Day of the Barricades," it was to Rouen that Henri III. fled from Paris, and waited there until the Edict of Union was signed, which excluded heretic princes from the succession to the throne. Once in the hands of the League, Rouen shut her gates to Henri III. and Henri 1V. By this last king the siege was long and desper-

ate, and by a Captain Valdory, who held the town, a full description of the hardships of the citizens and the valour of their defenders still remains. Only when the King of Navarre, "le bon Béarnais" of the south, had abjured his religion did the gates of Rouen open to him in October, 1596.

The troubles of the League had barely

died away before the agitations of the Fronde began, and the little Louis XIV. (then only twelve years old) had to ffy to Rouen for safety with Mazarin. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes repaid this hospitality in most untoward fashion, for it reduced the population of the town by

20,000 souls, andcommerce disappeared. "Men live," cried Saint Simon, "on the grass of the field in Normandy." Small wonder that when the next king passed through Rouen, and the Pompadour was seen smiling by the side of Louis XV., the citizens' reception of the doubtful honour was a very cold one. When Louis XVI. paid his call of ceremony upon the Mayor to the saluting of the great guns from the



Tomb of the Cardinals d Amboise, Chapelle de la Sainte Vierge. The Cathedral, Rouen.

"Vieux Palais," and the sound of the Cathedral bells, a melancholy presage seemed to break the harmony of the welcoming peal from the belfrey, for the great bell, George d'Amboise — that weighed 36 000 pounds and had rung every century since the great Minister of Louis XII. had given it,—cracked suddenly and was never heard again. The

metal, however, was used later on for quite another purpose. When the Revolution suddenly broke out, the bronze that had served to call the faithful from all the countryside to prayer was melted into cannon and round shot that was to send the Royalists to heaven by much quicker and more decisive methods. passed comparatively lightly through the Reign of Terror. Even on the first of November, 1703, we hear of the first night of Boieldieu's "La Belle Coupable," performed at the Théâtre de la Montagne; and though Thouret is sent up as Deputy, though the irascible Marquis d'Herbouville is always making a disturbance, though the "Carabots" revolt and break out into pillage, it is only when "Anarchists" come down from Paris that the good folk of Rouen draw the line. fact, they hanged the over-zealous Bourdier and Jourdain upon the public quay, just at the entry to the Pont aux Bateaux.

The great Napoleon first saw Rouen in its capacity as a trading centre. Its industry very soon recovered, and even an "Exposition" was organised in the Tribunal de Commerce, which was inspected by Josephine and the First Consul Bonaparte. He came back again as Emperor, and the kings who had been deposed with so much bloodshed and fanfaronade reappeared as if nothing had happened when Louis Philippe laid the first stone for the pedestal of Corneille's statue carved by David d'Augers. In 1871 that statue was all draped in black. The streets of Rouen, hung with funeral drapery, were all in the deepest mourning, every shop was closed and every window shuttered. Upon the Plain of Sotteville a great army was manœuvring to and fro to the sound of harsh words of command in an unknown tongue. General Manteuffel, the Duke of Mecklenburg, and "Prince Fritz" had led the German army of invasion into Rouen, and from December till July the invaders occupied the town and its surrounding villages. The traces of this last catastrophe have absolutely disappeared. The ruin of the Revolution and the iconoclasm of the Religious Wars have left far deeper marks, and Rouen, sacked by the English and occupied by the Germans, suffered more injury at the hands of her own citizens than from any foreign foe.

By such scenes as those I have too hurriedly suggested is the history of Rouen connected with that larger story of a greater France which is familiar to us all. It is written upon the wall of its churches, and on the tombs of its unforgotten dead. Within the great Cathedral and the many parish churches were the meeting-places of the people, and the centres of their fêtes, as recorded by David Ferrand and others whom I have already quoted. In the more pretentious Latin poems of Hercule Grisel you see how all these fêtes and jollities lasted on till well into the seventeenth century. The Fête Ste. Anne, when boys dressed as Angels and girls as Virgins ran about the streets; the St. Vivien, which was a great popular fair in Bois Guillaume and in the city; the Festin du Cochon, when Parliament was dined; the Pentecost, when birds and leaves and flowers were rained upon the congregation from the roof of the Cathedral; the Feast of the Farmers in November, when the principal dish of roast goose was provided by a crowd of boys who had to kill the wretched bird by throwing sticks at it, as it fluttered helplessly at the end of a high pole; the Papegault, when the Cinquantaine, or Company of Arquebusiers, went a-shooting to settle who should be the Roi d'Oiseau, very much as it is described in Germany in the pages of Jean Paul Richter; the Jeu d'Anguille in May, when there was a jousting match upon the river like the water tournaments of Provence; the jollities of Easter Eve, when bands of children went about the streets shouting derision at the now dishonoured Herring, and pitching barrels and fish-barrows into the river; the greatest and most impressive

ceremony of all, the Levée de la Fierte, upon Ascension Day, which cannot even be hinted at in the space here given to me—all these festivities made up a large part of the life of the real Rouennais of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. which was so narrowed and restricted in itself that it took every opportunity of expanding into a common gaiety shared by all the neighbours and the countryside.

The river was a scene of far greater bustle and activity and picturesqueness than it is now. Like the Thames, the Seine lost half its beauty when the old watermen disappeared. The harbour of the sixteenth century was always full of movement: sailors were always spreading over the riverside streets into the countless inns and drinking-places; the river was full of boats going to and fro; the bank upon the farther side was the fashionable promenade of all the ladies of the town; the bridges

were filled with idlers who had no better business than to look on. At the fête called the Gâteau des Rois all the ships were lit up in the port, and every tradesman in the town sent presents to his customers: the druggists gave gifts of liqueurs and condiments; the bakers brought cakes to every door; the chandlers brought the "chandelles des Rois" to every household. At the favourite meeting-places of Pont de Robec, or the Parvis Notre Dame, or the Eglise St. Vivien,

the housewives gathered to watch their husbands drink and gamble, or bought flowers from the open stalls, or chaffered with the apprentices who stood ready Meanwhile from all the for the bargain. forests near the children of the poor were coming in with bundles of the faggots they were allowed to gather free; at every large house parties were gathering, each guest with her special contribution

Tower of St. Onen from S.E.

to the common fund of sweetmeats and of fruit, some even had brought bottles of the famous mineral water sold at the Church of St. Paul, and the Confrérie de Sainte Cecile was hard-worked distributing its musicians broadcast to the many private gatherings that called for pipe and ta-Then as the evening lowered, men told stories over the hearth of the girl who had seen three suns at once upon the morn of Holy Trinity from a neighbouring hill-top, or of the luck of their

compère Jehan, whose boy, born on the day of the conversion of St. Paul, was safe for all his life from danger of poison or of snake-bite. All these customs and superstitions are reflected in Hercule Grisel's Latin verses, which he begins with a needless apology—

"Rotomagi patriæ versu volo pandere mores, Quis captum patrize damnet amore suce?" No one will blame his patriotic love of every detail of the life around him; and though the Latin that he uses might

well have been exchanged for his own language, it must be remembered that even when Malherbe and Corneille, Racine and Boileau, were writing French, the older language held a firm hold on such men as de Thou, Descartes, Bossuet,



Interior of St. Julien-Petit-Quevilly.

Arnauld, and Nicole, who desired to appeal to European audiences. "Victurus Latium debet habere liber" was their motto; and by Jesuits and Oratorians, University dignitaries and ecclesiastics, lawyers and doctors, the same language was used as that in which Hercule Grisel has preserved the life of the town from 1615 to 1657.

The greatest name of seventeenthcentury Rouen is Pierre Corneille, "ce vieux Romain parmi les français" as Voltaire called him; and we may be grateful that after getting the second prize for Latin verses in the third class of the Jesuit College, he gave up stilted affectations for the vigorous phases of his mother - tongue. Though his brother Thomas passes over the little episode in silence, his nephew Fontenelle lets us into a literary secret which reveals Corneille's first love affair in Rouen. In he comedy of "Mélite," the heroine is Catherine the daughter of the Receveur des Aides, Eraste is the poet himself. In real life, Thomas du Pont, the Tircis of the play, supplanted his friend and married the lady. It was to another Rouen acquaintance that Corneille owed the advice to study Spanish plays, which resulted in his imitations of de Castro. and no doubt the many Spanish families then settled, for commercial reasons, in the town helped to turn the young poet's thoughts in the same direction. evidently thorough knowledge of the details of legal procedure, when it cannot be ascribed to the natural Norman turn of mind already mentioned, is accounted for by his position as Avocat du Roi and one of the Admiralty Court (called the "Marble Table") of Rouen. Though in the "Cid" his law is Spanish, and in "Horace" it is a paraphrase of Livy, yet Corneille was the first to realise that the speeches of lawyers, which were then little known to the general public, would form a very interesting scene upon the stage. His immediate success proved the worth of the idea. But that such success was possible at all is even more extraordinary than any particular form it may have taken. He created types for well-nigh every kind of dramatic literature in France, in the midst of his work as an advocate, among serious family troubles, through years of plague, of popular riots, of military occupations. His house, close to the Hôtel Bourgtheroulde, is still preserved, though the front has been mutilated by the widening of the street. Here he received the young Molière, who was travelling with a small theatre at the bottom of the Rue Herbière; and it was on the night when his own piece followed "L'Etourdi" and "Le Dépit Amoureux," that Corneille, sitting in the spectators' seats, fell in love with du Parc, the pretty actress. His country house of "Petit Couronne" at Quévilly is still standing

But the name of Corneille has insensibly led us away from those less wellknown, but far greater, artists who worked upon the churches and preserved in them

the story of the people's lives. architect has sought the same ideals, but each has expressed it with the difference which the originality of his individual genius suggested. To take one instance of this difference in similarity, the west entrance of the three great churches I have named. The Cathedral porches open all upon one straight line, and its west front is at right angles for its whole length. to the side aisles. The porch of St. Maclou behind it is built on a protruding curve, the central arch only is at right angles to the aisles, the arches on each side of it slope backwards towards the north-east and south-east, and an extraordinarily rich effect of perspective is given which is very artfully heightened by the actual proportions of the building. In St. Ouen the west front that you see today is a modern excrescence. Though the architect had the remnants of the old walls to guide him, and though even the old working drawing (which I shall reproduce elsewhere) was in existence, he deliberately built a straight west front with two frigid and meaningless spires that do not harmonise in the least with the exquisite central tower which Miss Tames has drawn from the south-east. The builders of the real west front of St. Ouen had imagined something different both to the Cathedral and to St. Maclou. They planned an entrance on a retreating curve, in which the central door was farthest back and the two side-doors were set forward at an angle, crowned by two low towers on the same plan as the

beautiful coroneted shaft which rises in the centre of the Abbey. Here, then, is one example of the originality of the old builders. I have no further space even to indicate how many more there are. I can but leave you to wander from one church to another, to look as carefully upon the external walls as on the pillars and stained glass within, and to remember that in every square yard of the old carved stone and oak there is the story of a generation.

The History of the Middle Ages is written upon magnificent and imperishable volumes. Their virtues and vices, their jests and indecencies, their follies and their fears, are all writ large upon the pages of a book that was ever open to every passer-by, and that remains for us to read. It is no rhetorical exaggeration that "Ceci tuera cela" of Victor Hugo. Our smaller doings are recorded in the perishable print of fading paper, and we have no care to stamp what little we have left of character upon our buildings. No one, at least, it may be fervently hoped, will try in the future to reconstruct the ideals or the life of the Victorian Era from its architecture. Yet we are the heirs of all that is noblest in that greatest of all arts; and if you would test that, you need only look at any mediæval French Cathedral with a seeing eye. You will find no meaningless mass of bricks and mortar, but the speaking record of the age that built it. "The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."



WANTED—AN EXPLANATION.

BY CECIL ASHLEIGH.

ILLUSTRATED BY MALCOLM PATTERSON.

I SAT, deep in the musings of a man who reviews his investments, on a rough, wooden bench overlooking Alum Bay. The bench was situated upon a ledge of sandy rock, wherefrom the cliff sloped gradually down to the shore. Behind me was a chine.

Across the Solent, between Bournemouth and Poole, the setting sun flooded the horizon with red-gold fire, which flickered, paled, then flared up again with renewed brilliance.

It was an evening in early autumn, the stillness only broken by the splash of ripples along the beach and the drowsy hum of unseen insects. I am not poetical by nature, God forbid! but the silent grandeur of this scene, and a fragrant pipe, led me to the trivial enjoyment of day-dreams, the building of foolish castles in the air. Thankful, indeed, was I to be out of the hurly-burly, far from the madding crowd of toiling men. Not in vain had I worked for the little competence which now enabled me to seek solitude and find it.

Earlier in the year Alum Bay is less quiet, but now, in September, most people have gone back to their London homes, refreshed, recuperated, in order that they may again fall in need of rest and change.

Presently the even tenor of my thoughts



A female in black came up the cliff and stood before me.

was broken. A female, dressed wholly in black, came up the cliff and stood before me. The interruption was unsought and vexatious.

"May I sit here, beside you?" she asked, in a soft, pleading voice.

I am not the man to respond to advances from persons to whom I have not been officially introduced. Against female blandishments I am adamant. Pharaoh could not have hardened his heart more resolutely than I did at this critical moment. I glared at the woman through my glasses, and replied, gruffly, "The seat is free. We are not in Hyde Park; there is no penny to pay. I cannot prevent you from availing yourself of the accommodation if you really desire it."

I shuffled along my bench, and got so close to the farther edge that I nearly fell off.

Surely, I considered, such an implied rebuke would have due effect. I should never thrust myself where not wanted. No one would get the chance to snub me twice—I'd take good care of that.

This woman, however, ignored, or affected to ignore, my remark. She sat down at the other extremity of the bench, and began to trace geometrical figures in the sand, while I turned my attention again to the sunset, and my châteaux en Espagne.

What was that? Surely this creature was not crying? She suffered, perhaps, from a cold in the head, or hay-fever. I am a charitable man. I attributed these extraordinary sniffing noises to hay-fever, or a cold in the head. Humph! my pipe was out. I re-lit it, and gazed with appreciative eyes at the glorious view. Only Turner could have done justice—faint, meagre justice—to the glowing sky, splashed here and there with crimson, and deep, rich amber. And Turner's master-hand was stilled for ever!

Clouds springing up from the west, behind St. Alban's Head, chased one another across the heavens; a slight wind fanned the water into little billows; sea-horses reared their white crests along the tide. Then the sun went down abruptly, and a small bright ray across the sea told me that a lighthouse had begun its nightly vigil.

Out on the deep, leisurely returning, was a fishing-boat, a mere speck. Beyond, towering above it, a Cape Liner, homeward bound, ploughed up the current, leaving in its wake a ribbon-like streak of foam. In the hush of the twilight I could hear the thud of her engines, voices of passengers, and a splash of water churned by the powerful screw.

Then my companion, woman-like, broke the silence, and, also woman-like, with a question as irrelevant as it was incongruous.

"Do you think black suits me?"

I became sarcastic, my wont when vexed by foolishness.

"As I have never had the—hum!—pleasure of seeing you in any other colour, it will strike you, on reflection, that I am not qualified to express an opinion."

I felt mightily proud of this speech.

"Cruel, heartless man," she murmured.
"The sex never varies. Prim, pragmatical, pedantic. Asked a question, they throw a stone. Fresh fish is flavourless when unaccompanied by salt. While poor me—ah me!"

"Confound my pipe," I thought; "what ails it?" I struck a match; it exploded suddenly and burnt my finger. I choked a violent expletive, a yell of anger and pain.

"I suppose, sir, I dare hardly ask a favour of you?"

"Really, madam," I retorted, "I can imagine no feat too difficult for you to attempt."

She laughed, a merry little laugh, clear as the jingling of a sheep-bell.

"How frightfully prosaic you are. Will nothing induce you to be more gallant, to show me at least such common courtesy as is due from a gentleman to a lonely and unbefriended lady?"

At repartee I am no expert. I surrendered without further resistance.

"What do you want me to do?"

"I am alone, helpless, and unhappy, tortured by secret fears which are not less terrible because so vague. outlines of ill-omen surround me, and my future becomes each moment darker and more alarming. I must be at Yarmouth by nine to-night. I can find no conveyance here, so it is necessary for me to proceed to Totland, where, doubtless,

some vehicle may be obtained. I dare not cross Headon Hill now, unaccompanied, after dark. The track is narrow, and, in my ignorance of this frightful place, I might easily miss it, and find myself wandering among the heather. There the ground is covered with rabbit-holespicture to yourself how easily I might catch

my foot in one of these, sprain my ankle, and fall, unable to continue my journey. After sunset no one would see me-the coastguard keep to the cliffedge. I should perish of fright, suffering, starvation, before to-morrow's dawn What a horrible fate!" gesticulated with both hands, a Frenchified method of conversing which irritates me. "Then again, I am followed, my footsteps are dogged by a wretch, a fiend wearing the outer form of a man. I cannot escape him, do what I may. I read a menace in his wicked eyes. With you as my escort he dare not

offer me affront. Say, good sir, will you be my guide, my champion, and see me safely to Totland?"

Now I am no Don Quixote, nor Squire of Dames. An adventure such as this might be welcomed by a younger man, but for me, a bachelor, and, if you will, a misogynist, it had no attraction at all. So I made prompt answer, with perhaps more emphasis than the occasion warranted, "On no account."

The female in black sighed, raised her

thick veil, disclosing a face which I suppose was beautiful (as woman's beauty goes), and wiped away a tear. This moved me to a delicate hint.

"I perceive the dew is falling. Hadn't you better proceed on your journey?"

She heaved

another deep sigh, shook her head sadly, and walked away. I heard sobs as

she disappeared behind the furze-bushes. Before I could congratulate myself on recovered privacy it was again invaded. A man, short, fat, ferret-faced, shabbily dressed, with a dusty brown bowler, and a general air of self-satisfied vulgarity, came scrambling up the cliff and accosted me.

"That lady-" he stopped, cocked his head on one side, and winked.

I was too astounded to speak.

"Did she say anything?"

Now this was a gross attack upon the liberty of the subject. I am a peaceable, law-abiding citizen, and I insist upon having my private rights recognised



A man came scrambling up the cliff and accosted me.

was an air of a third-rate detective about both this fellow himself and his impudent questioning. I absolutely decline to be cross-examined by any man living except under the jurisdiction of a court of law.

I was indignant, and took no pains to

to keep what remained of my temper. "She had picked up a cigar on the beach and wanted a match."

I could see he took this statement for what it was worth.

"Just as I expected," he remarked.

"Well, you mustn't attach
importance to anything she
may have said. Poor lady!
Poor, poor lady! Did she
tell you she was Queen Victoria?"

"No; but don't let that disturb you. I should not have believed her if she had."

> was a miserable woman seeking refuge from a wicked persecutor?"

"Nor that she

hide it. I stared at the man with a frown, and replied, curtly, "She spoke to me."

I saw without astonishment a second man,

"That," he observed, with unabated cheerfulness, and another wink, "I saw for myself. I want to know what she said."

"Indeed," I retorted. And it was equivalent to "The deuce you do!"

"Yes. Indeed and indeed—and indeed."

"Then I will tell you," I said, struggling

"Not a syllable of it!"

"Ha!" he ejaculated. He stuck one hand in each pocket, and stood, his legs wide apart, gazing at me with a curious and peculiarly irritating smirk.

"Perhaps," I said at last, finding this scrutiny offensive, "you will kindly inform me what you find in my face to grin at?"

"Nothing at all," he replied. "He!

That's just the joke. Absolutely nothing whatever." Then he tapped "You can his forehead significantly. thank your lucky stars you've got off so cheap. She's a raving lunatic-stark; staring, raving mad. For two pins she'd have stuck a knife into you. She always P'raps you talked to her carries one. nicely, perlitely, sort of soothing like. That's why she didn't molest you, evidently. Congratulate yourself, governor. I'm her keeper. Down the beach I happened to come across an old schoolfellow of mine, a coastguardsman. Of course we got varning together-natural when two old pals meet. She takes advantage of my back being turned to slope off and make tracks for you. Simple enough, ain't it? But I don't see why I'm telling you all these perticulars, wasting time, while perhaps my lady's getting into fresh mischief. So long, old chap!"

I was speechless with rage at the fellow's audacity. For fully five minutes I sat choking and struggling for breath. I had never met with such infernal impudence before.

The sunset no longer had any charm for me. The wind, now turned colder, blew right in my face, stinging it with salt vapour from the open sea.

I was in that dazed mental condition when one ceases to feel surprise at anything. I saw without astonishment a second man sauntering towards me from the beach. He raised his yachting cap with a profound bow, and said, in tones devoid of irony.

"Sir, I salute you!"

"I observe the fact. May I enquire the reason?"

"You may, sir. You, sir, are not to be bluffed. I have immense respect for any old gentleman"—old, forsooth; I am not sixty yet—" who is not to be caught with chaff."

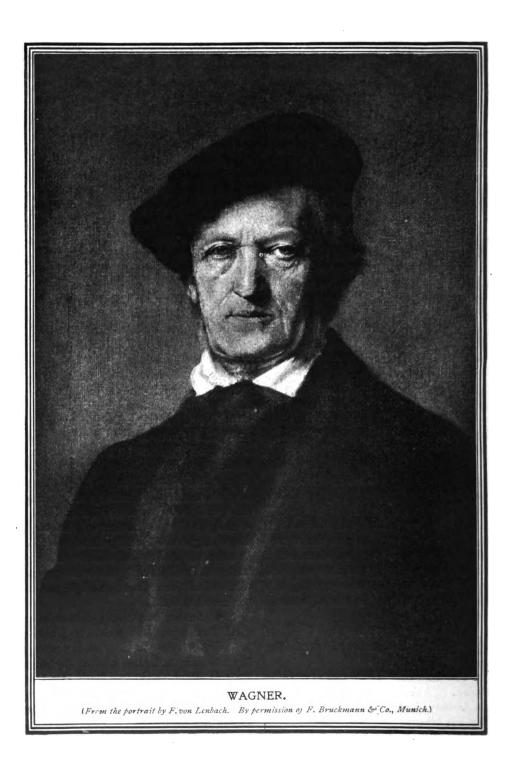
"Come to the point, sir," I said, testily.
"I will. It was fortunate for you, sir, that you did not fall a victim to the wiles

of a clever and unscrupulous woman. Mad? Not a bit of it—as sane as you or I, perhaps saner." (Speaking for myself, I quite agreed with him.) "As for the man, you twigged his dodge instanter-Scotland Yard, eh, every inch of him. But, mark you, a bad imitation. those two are up to between them Heaven only knows. No good, I conjecture. Personally, I am apt to regard with suspicion—ah, there they go! a foxy pair, by George! I'll just follow and see what the game really is. I've my private doubts -if I communicated them to you they would be no longer private. Therefore you'll excuse my reticence. I'm a barrister -Q.C., you know. I haven't a card with me. Ta-ta! Once more, on passing, I salute you as a pattern to the rest of mankind."

He bowed gravely, with the air of a Russian ambassador, and left me. curiosity was now thoroughly aroused, and I determined to solve this threefold conundrum. I waited there for an hour or more, but none of the trio re-appeared. I searched Headon Hill, and found no clue. I made enquiries, both at Alum Bay and Totland, in vain No one had seen them at all, no conveyance of any kind had been hired at Totland that evening, and each member of the Alum Bay coastguard declared positively that he had encountered no old friend whatever, in fact the man on duty at the time swore that he had not spoken to a single person while on the beach.

Mysteries are particularly distasteful to me. I am a practical person, and abhor anything in the shape of hanky-panky. To this moment I cannot satisfy my mind on this point—was some Dark Deed, in progress that evening, frustrated by accident? Or was I the victim of an elaborate practical joke? If the latter, and the three conspirators chance to read these lines, will they be so very kind as to discover the jest. I really think I have been kept in suspense long enough.

3 B 2



RICHARD WAGNER AND "THE NIBELUNGEN RING."*

BY WILLIAM F. S. WALLACE.

WITH A REPRODUCTION OF THE PORTRAIT BY F. VON LENBACH.

II .- THE DRAMATIC PLAN.



O artistic work of modern times has raised such discussion as the text of The Nibelungen Ring. It has called forth opinions as to its

bearing on Dogma and Faith, on Religion and Human Ideals, the significance of each word of the text has been scrutinised as narrowly as any school-master's $\mu \nu$ or $\delta \nu$, till the mind is dazed and we wonder if "he really meant all that." Wagner the poet and thinker, the prophet, in other words, has almost been made to efface Wagner the composer.

The metaphysical part of the business is not ours at the present time—we have to view the dramatic conception from a dispassionate everyday aspect; for its relations to philosophy and ethics, its abstract value as a contribution to nineteenth-century thought, are too abstruse to be comprehended while we are witnessing a performance of *The Ring*. The work is too many-sided for one to possess the power of focusing the brain upon all of its points at once, and the listener would be wise to settle with himself what most he desires to study when listening to a rendering of the work.

The story itself is simple enough, for the plot advances in historical sequence,

and there are no bye-issues to be explained or to complicate the main scheme. A word must be said in passing regarding the English translations. Tortuous in all conscience is Wagner's style, whether in poetry or prose, and the so-called English versions designed to be faithful parallels in sound, if not in sense, have resulted in monumental absurdity. The original tex is imitative of the Stabreim, an alliterative formation of old High German poetry, in which consonants of like sound were employed according to certain rules in the building up of the verses. Wagner's procedure is an artificial one-he seems unconsciously to have parodied himself in Beckmesser-and every translation that has been carried out with a view to imitating in our own language the sound of the German words has resulted in a balderdash that is simply woeful. English versions have often done more harm than good, for, as I have said in my first article, no equivalent in another language is possible for singing purposes, and they have excited the mirth, if not the wrath, of many a reader of them.

In The Nibelungen Ring Wagner was dealing with a theme familiar to every German, and he sublimated his dramatic scheme from the Sagas, reproducing their quintessence and bringing forth from the fastnesses of time incidents which he collected into an united whole. To appreciate the dramatic side of the subject the easiest way is to view it as it were through the wrong end of a telescope, for we have a

four act play spread out into four plays, each of which has its own separate sections, and these have to be brought into perspective. Incident does not hustle action with furious rapidity, nor are there any brilliant points to be made. Every allusion is examined, tested, analysed, verified, classified, catalogued, and pigeon-holed; every step is leisurely, calculated, deliberate, circumspect, and we are duly reminded of what has already happened in case we should have been asleep at some important event.

This sounds tediously Teutonic, but when you hear that music, that fusion of man's soul into sound, you forget the tedium, you forget the story, you weave stories for yourself and listen so absorbedly that the slightest rustle on the part of your neighbour startles you as if it were a thunderclap.

Wagner took himself very seriously, and we often find the line between the sublime and the ridiculous stretched to the narrowest; let me try to make that line a little broader.

The Rhinegold serves as Das Rhein a prologue to The Ring. gold. Scene i. It opens with a scene at the bottom of the river. In the waters swim the Rhine-daughters, guarding the Rhinegold, the treasure which lies on a ridge of rock in the midst of the stream. Out of the depths comes Alberich, a Nibelung of the race of dwarfs who desires the Maidens, and is led by them in a wild chase over the rocks. ridge in the centre of the stream a soft light begins to penetrate the waters, it comes from the golden treasure upon which the rays of the rising sun have The Maidens tell Alberich of the power of the gold, that the ring which is made from it will encompass the wealth of the universe, but that he who would possess it must forswear the delights of Fascinated with the idea of boundless might, Alberich clambers up the rock, seizing the gold he wrenches it from its

place, and with a curse of renunciation of love he disappears. The stage grows dark, the river turns to clouds of mist which gradually disperse, disclosing the second scene.

It is a meadow; in the Scene ii. background is seen Walhalla, the stronghold that has been built by Wotan, chief of the gods, by the giants Fasolt and Fafner, in payment for which labour they demand Freia, Goddess of Youth and Beauty. In the foreground are Wotan and Fricka, his wife, asleep. She wakens him and reminds him of the price he has promised to pay the giants, reproaching him with having sold her sister Freia to them in order to possess a castle which will gain him more power. Freia enters hastily and asks to be delivered from the giants who are pursuing her. Wotan has discreetly concealed his bargain from her. Fasolt and Fafner now enter and remind Wotan of the contract; it is written on his spear, the emblem of his power, but the god-chief coolly proposes to repudiate it. He bids the giants ask lower terms, but they are firm and are about to lay hands on Freia when her brothers, Froh and Donner, come to the rescue. Wotan, meanwhile, is anxiously awaiting the coming of Loge, God of Fire as well as of Deceit, to whom he looks for a stratagem to enable him to break his word. This Loge does by relating the rape of the Rhinegold. The covetousness of the giants is aroused and they demand the gold as ransom for Freia; Wotan hesitates, and they carry her off, giving him till nightfall to make up his mind. With her departure a mist enshrouds the stage so that the personages look old and grey—they have not eaten of her apples, the golden fruit of youthand Loge taunts Wotan with this, that without Freia the race of gods must pass away. Stung by this mockery Wotan resolves to have the gold, and, following Loge, disappears in quest of it by a cleft in a rock.

We are now in the cavernous Scene iii. abode of the Nibelungs. Alberich enters, dragging after him Mime, who has been fashioning a piece of metalwork. This is the "Tarnhelm," a cap which has the virtue of making its wearer vanish from sight or assume what form he wishes. Alberich promptly tests its efficiency by disappearing so that nothing remains but a column of smoke, while Mime is painfully conscious of his presence by feeling the blows of a whip on his back. Wotan and Loge now appear. Mime has fashioned the Ring out of the gold, and by means of the Tarnhelm has guessed its spells. Alberich resents the visit of Wotan and Loge, but boasts of the possession of treasure which will bring the world to his feet. Loge ingeniously leads him to speak of the Tarnhelm, and suggests a demonstration of its properties. Placing it on his head, Alberich changes himself into a huge serpent, at which Loge professes to be very much afraid, but hints that it might be equally convenient for the dwarf to assume a small size as being less likely to attract attention, mentioning a toad as an instance. Alberich again puts on the cap and becomes a toad, which Wotan promptly crushes with his foot. Possessed of the Tarnhelm they bind Alberich, once more in human shape, hand and foot, and drag him forth.

We find ourselves back in Scene iv. the open space of Scene ii. Alberich, at Wotan's mercy, grudgingly promises to surrender the treasure, the Dwarfs swarm from the cleft in the rock and heap it up in the shape of dishes and vessels of gold. The Tarnhelm is thrown on the pile, and Wotan appropriates the Ring. Alberich, with a curse. disappears. Fasolt and Fasner come back with Freia, and once more the scene brightens with her presence. measure a space and stipulate that the treasure must be piled within it so as to conceal their hostage from view. To

fulfil their conditions the Tarnhelm has to go with the treasure, and, lastly, the Ring to fill up a chink. This, however, is not done until Erda, Goddess of Earth, has warned Wotan to resign it. Freia is therefore free; and in a quarrel over the treasure Fafner kills Fasolt, the first proof of the curse which the gold brings its owner. After a peal of thunder a rainbow is seen stretching to Walhalla, and towards this bridge goes Wotan with Fricka and the other deities to take possession of his stronghold. Fafner, meanwhile, has left with his treasure, and, as The Rhinegold concludes, the faint echo of the Rhine-daughters' song rises from the valley below.

In the interval between the two dramas many years are supposed to have passed. In order to gain possession of the Ring, the loss of which implies the annihilation of the race of gods, Wotan has begotten two children by an earthly woman, for the treasure can only be redeemed by a champion born of human kind. These children are Siegmund and Sieglinde, twin brother and sister, who grew up together, till one day the latter was carried off for wife by Hunding. The Walküre are the nine daughters of Wotan by Erda, of whom Brünnhilde is the most renowned.

The scene is Hunding's hut, Act L in the centre of which grows a great ash tree. As the curtain rises Siegmund enters as if in flight, and sinks exhausted before the fire. Thinking it is her husband, Sieglinde comes in and finds a stranger, to whom she offers refreshment and a resting-place. He turns to go, warned by a new-born emotion towards her, but she asks him to stay, and Hunding enters. The husband is struck by Siegmund's resemblance to his wife, but says nothing, asking merely the name of his guest and welcoming him according to old-time custom. Siegmund proceeds to tell his story. Without declaring his name, he relates how the maid-companion

with whom he grew up was forced to marry against her will. Hunding divines that the maid in question is now his wife, whom he carried off by force from Sieg mund, and finding that his guest is at war with his (Hunding's) tribe, he bids him be ready to fight at dawn and retires to rest for the night. Siegmund is alone, reflecting that he is weaponless; then Sieglinde enters, telling him that she has drugged her husbandand bidding her guest escape. She tells of a Stranger who came to her wedding feast when she sat sorrowing, a man armed with a sword, which he struck into the ash tree round which Hunding's hut is built. He had vowed that it should belong to theman who should have strength to draw it forth; all failed to move it, but now she knows who shall wield it and own her as well. The Stranger, as the orchestra reminds us, was Wotan, who left the sword there for his son, and Sieglinde declares that Siegmund shall possess Gently they yield to one another, the sister as bride to the brother. she remembers Siegmund's name, and he, seizing the sword-hilt, draws the blade from the tree. The act closes as the two go forth into the night.

The scene is a wild ravine, Act II. where Brünnhilde appears for a moment, urged by Wotan to arm and prepare to defend Siegmund Hunding. Fricka protests against the unholy wedlock of Siegmund and Sieglinde and the wrong done to Hunding. Goddess of the Marriage-Riteshe demands the death of Siegmund in expiation of the insult to the vows which she protects. Siegmund, however, possesses the sword which makes him invincible, and his death can only be compassed by Wotan banning the weapon so that it shall fail him in his need. Brünnhilde reappears, and finds that Wotan, in obedience to his wife. has changed his mind, standing in the light of his own redemption by assenting to Siegmund's death. She is cautioned not to befriend Siegmund but to warn him of his fate. But when the incestuous pair approach she is touched at Sieglinde's despair, and resolves to disobey her father. Hunding, in pursuit, now faces Siegmund, whom Brünnhilde defends with her shield so as to give him a chance to aim a death stroke at the injured husband. But at this moment Wotan stretches forth his spear and the sword is shivered against it. Siegmund is slain, and as Fricka's demand is now fulfilled Wotan contemptuously waves his hand and the avenged Hunding falls dead.

The scene is a rocky pass; Act iii. the eight Walküren awaiting the coming of their sister She swoops through the Brünnhilde. air on her horse, bearing Sieglinde flying from Wotan's wrath. When her sisters learn of her disobedience they refuse to help her, but Sieglinde pleads for her babe that is coming and is bidden to escape on Brünnhilde's horse to the place where Fasner bore the treasure, about the most dangerous spot that could have been chosen. Brünnhilde warns her to guard with care the fragments of Siegmund's sword for the son that is yet to be born, "Siegfried" she names him, because through Siegmund's line will the gods be redeemed from their impending fate. Wotan comes to punish Brünnhilde; he takes her god-head from her. and condemns her to sleep on a rock till a man shall awake her and claim her for his bride. But to make it sure that none but the most valiant shall win her, he surrounds her with a circle of fire through which only the stoutest of heart shall pass, and so bids her farewell.

We come to Siegried, the most human of the series of dramas. Fasner, now transformed into a dragon (a bodily form singularly inconvenient for the wielding of worldly wealth and power), has retired to a cave to watch over his treasure. Hard by dwell Alberich and his brother Mime. Tended by the latter, Sieglinde died giving birth

to her son Siegfried; and the dwarf has brought up the lad, cherishing a hope that when he becomes a man he will slay the Dragon and gain for him the treasure. Mime knows that the fragments of the sword may also help him to accomplish this end.

The scene is a cave in a Act i. forest. Mime is attempting to forge a sword, but as Siegfried, now in the fullness of manhood, smashes to pieces all his attempts he abandons the task in despair. Siegfried himself appears and splinters Mime's sword, expressing his loathing at having to associate with such a miserable wretch as the dwarf. Mimé chides him for his ingratitude, but is bullied into telling him the story of his parentage, showing him, in proof, the fragments of the sword. Siegfried sets him to weld them together. and rushes out into the forest.

Wotan now enters, a wanderer on the earth, and he and Mime sound one another as to their knowledge of circumstances with which the audience is already acquainted. Mime does not recognise his visitor, but learns that the broken sword can be mended only by him who has not learned what fear is. When Siegfried returns the dwarf tests his courage, and craftily sets him to work at the forge. While Siegfried is mending the sword Mime cooks a mess for him, drugging it, so that while Siegfried is asleep he may kill him and so secure the sword for himself. Siegfried at length has the blade finished, and to Mime's consternation cleaves the anvil in twain at one blow.

Act it. We are in a deep forest, before the entrance of Fafner's cave. It is night, and Alberich is watching the Lair of Envy, when he is met by Wotan who has come to warn him that Mime is at hand with the hero destined to kill Fafner. The dawn breaks, and Siegfried and Mime approach the Dragon's retreat, into which the former

looks without fear. Mime is dismissed. and with the sunrise the forest murmurs increase, and the birds begin to sing. Siegfried cuts a reed and tries to pipe an imitation of their song, but the effect is dismal; he then blows his horn, and Fafner is aroused and crawls to the opening of the cave. Siegfried greets him with roars of laughter, and after an exchange of incivilities he thrusts the sword into the Dragon's heart. As he withdraws the blade a drop of the Dragon's blood falls on his finger and scalds it. Instinctively he sucks it, and thus gains the power to understand what the birds say. They sing to him that the Nibelung treasure is his and that he is to take the Tarnhelm and Ring. He also acquires the faculty of learning what thoughts are in Mime's heart, and as the dwarf offers him a poisoned drink he strikes him dead. A bird tells him of Brünnhilde sleeping in the circle of fire waiting for him to win her, and he hastens to find her, led by the bird.

The Wanderer comes to Act III. the wild region where Erda Scene L dwells to consult her regarding the destiny of the gods. He learns that the world's redemption shall come through the love of Brünnhilde and Erda vanishes, and Siegfried appears, meeting Wotan for the first time. He tells him of his encounter with the Dragon and of his forging the sword, but, angered at Wotan's mockery, he raises his weapon and shatters the god-This is a sign that the chief's spear. gods' dominion is on the wane.

Once more we see Brünnhilde asleep in the circle of fire, where we left her in *Die Walküre*. Siegfried beholds her in wonder, passes through the flames and proceeds to remove the shield and helmet which conceal her face. But he who did not quail at the Dragon, who struck at the greatest of the Gods, now trembles at the sight of a Woman. He awakens her with a

kiss, and she hails him with references to Wotan and her disobedience, which puzzle him, for to him she is only a woman to be loved. But with her awakening she has recovered her divinity, and she holds him back from her, till Siegfried's passion flies to her, and the curtain falls as they embrace triumphantly.

The scene of the prologue Gotterdam. is the same as that of the end merung. of Siegfried. It is night, and Prologue. the three Norns, daughters of Erda, with the golden rope of Fate lying before them, forecast the end of the gods and the new world that is to arise. With the dawn they disappear, and Brünnhilde enters leading her horse. Siegfried is with her, clad in her armour. Ignorant of the curse upon it he gives her the Ring as token of his eternal love; she has given him all-knowledge and wisdom, and he goes forth to fight, no longer Siegfried but only Brünnhilde's arm. may be mentioned, in parenthesis, that while the cursed Ring was in Siegfried's possession it did not seem to do him any particular harm, but this is one of those trifling inconsistencies to which analyst has to steel himself in the course of this work.

The curtain rises on the Act L Hall of Gunther, who is dis-Scene i. covered there with his sister These are fresh characters in Gutrune. the drama. With them is Hagen their half-brother, son of Alberich, who is destined by his father to counteract the influence of Siegfried in the struggle for the Ring. Hagen's mission is to incite in Gunther a passion for Brünnhilde and to turn Gutrune to Siegfried by singing his praises, trusting to gain the Ring through the complications which must ensue. But lest Siegfried's heart may already have been won by another, Hagen prepares a drink which will cause him to forget all that was ever dear to him. Siegfried appears, and is welcomed and offered the poisoned cup which he drinks to Brünnhilde; but with terrible suddenness the charm works, and in an instant he declares to Gutrune his passion for her. Gunther answers this by discovering with equal suddenness his desire for Brünnhilde, and Siegfried, under the influence of the Cup of Forgetfulness, pledges himself with the Oath of Blood Brotherhood to aid his new friend's wooing. Hagen. who knows all the virtues and vices of the Nibelungen treasure, espies the Tarnhelm hanging from Siegfried's belt; he describes its power, and it is arranged that in the new wooing of Brünnhilde Siegfried is to wear it, and by means of it to take Gunther's form.

In the second scene we are back again at the scene of the prelude. Brünnhilde hears from one of the Walküren how Wotan sits silent, moody, in Walhalla. But once he said, half to himself, that if only the Rhinedaughters possessed the Ring again the world would be free from its curse. Brünnhilde, however, refuses to part with it as it was Siegfried's gift, even were Walhalla to fall to ruin. This is the one sublime god-like act in all *The Nibelungen Ring*.

Siegfried appears, but, thanks to the Tarnhelm, she does not recognise him, thinking him a stranger sent by Wotan to hunt her down. She protests that she is owned by another. But the pretended Gunther wrenches the Ring from her finger; with that her strength passes away and her captor bids her lead the way to her cave. In a representation this act of (the apparent) Siegfried is difficult to understand; but Siegfried is only himself to the audience—to Brünnhilde he appears to be Gunther, a man she has never seen.

We return to the Hall of Gunther. Siegfried, in the guise of Gunther, has delivered Brünnhilde to the real Gunther, and the warriors are assembled to welcome their chief and his newly-won bride. Siegfried still

under the Charm of Forgetfulness, but in his own person as Siegfried, leads forward Gutrune as his bride. Brünnhilde recognises him as Siegfried, and seeing on his finger the Ring that the supposed Gunther stole from her, is horrified that some trick has been played upon her. She asks Gunther for the Ring which he took from her by force; he remains silent. She turns to Siegfried, but despite the Charm of Forgetfulness (which in this instance seems to have been transferred to Richard Wagner himself) he conveniently remembers that he won the Ring from the Dragon. then suggests that Siegfried must have won the Ring from Gunther by deceit. Brünnhilde declares that it was to Siegfried that she was wed, and the crowd of warriors, ignorant of what went on in the last act of Siegfried, conclude that our hero has broken the Oath of Blood Brotherhood with Gunther and sullied his honour. More oaths are sworn, and Siegfried ends the matter by dragging Gutrune from the spot.

Hagen nows offers his services to Brünnhilde, but as she has surrounded Siegfried with a spell which protects him from all wounds in battle she says that no weapon can hurt him. Still there is a place, his back, where he is vulnerable, but she knew she need not protect it as he would never show it to a foe. Gunther and Hagen then arrange that Siegfried shall be killed during a boar-hunt next day.

Act iii. Scene i. banks of the Rhine. The Rhine-daughters entreat Siegfried to give up the Ring, but when he refuses they taunt him till he offers it to them. They will not accept it now, but they warn him that his death is near.

Gunther and Hagen come on the scene with the huntsmen, and while they refresh themselves Siegfried tells what the Rhine-daughters have predicted. Hagen asks him if it is true that he can understand the soags of the birds. Siegfried replies that

he has forgotten them since he learned the songs of women. It is a striking point in the unfolding of this character that, as he comes more under the baneful influence of the Ring, his remarks about women grow more and more cynical.

Siegfried proposes to tell stories of his youthful days, and he recounts once more all that we know already of Mime and Fafner and the Sword. As he reaches the point of Mime's poisoned cup, Hagen offers him a drink, an antidote to the Cup of Forgetfulness, Siegfried, unconscious of any double-dealing, drinks and resumes. He tells how the bird led him to Brünnhilde, and, freed from the Charm of Forgetfulness and ignorant of the part which the Tarnhelm caused him to play, describes how he wooed and won her, Gunther listening the while in dismay. Siegfried is referring, of course, to the events in the last act of Siegfried—matters of which Gunther is ignorant.

Suddenly two ravens fly upward from a thicket. Hagen asks Siegfried if he can tell what they say, and as the hero's attention is diverted Hagen stabs him in the back. Siegfried dies with a last lovesigh for Brünnhilde. The warriors raise his body on a shield and bear him to Gunther's Hall.

While the orchestra plays the Trauermarsch the scene Scene ii. is changed to the Hall. funeral procession arrives, the warriors come with torches, bearing the dead Siegfried. Hagen acknowledges himself the author of the deed and demands the Ring. Gunther interferes and is slain. Again he demands it, and grasps at it as it rests on Siegfried's finger; but the dead hero's arm is raised with a menace. Brünnhilde now claims Siegfried as her eternal love, bidding the warriors heap up a funeral pyre. last words are in defence of her husband, making her love and his clear, for although he won her unwillingly in the guise of Gunther, still "he was the purest, he who betrayed me: deceiving his wife, but true to his friends, he placed his sword between us," in reference to the time when he tore the Ring from her.

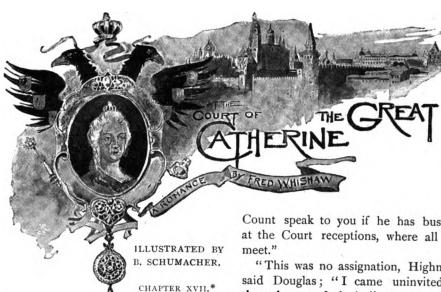
Siegfried is laid on the pile; she touches the faggots with a torch, and as the flames rise higher and higher she mounts her horse and gallops into their midst. The Ring is refined by fire and returns to the Rhine whence it came; the beams of the Hall of Gunther catch fire and fall to the ground, while Walhalla itself is seen in flames with the gods in silence awaiting their twilight.

Such then is Wagner's story.

It strikes us in places as childish, incomprehensible, and yet there is an Old Testament simplicity about it which gives it a prophetic dignity. Its inconsistencies may clamour for redress, but the written word

After all, what matters it if must remain. Wagner didtrim his mythology to suit his own ends? Why need we complain of his medley of fin de siècle gods who were more helpless than mortals, of men who were more powerful than gods? We need not ask why Wotan's might was made the plaything of villainy, why his god-craft should have been a thunderbolt and yet a wisp of The music alone makes us waive all objections; as we open our ears to it we shut our eyes to the incongruities of mythology and magic, to the disregard for morals, and accept the inspiration of a god greater than Wotan-Wagner himself. The quest of the Rhinegold fades before the beautiful character of Brünnhilde, and the redemption of the world by a woman who gave all for love.





H!" said her Highness, "a private interview-Naryshkin discreetly removed; no raised tones; one would think it was a rendezvous of lovers instead of a mere meeting between guardian and ward! See that Katkoff hears nothing of it, Countess Elsa! He would be jealous indeed!"

I was about to reply to this as angrily as a respectful attitude towards my mistress allowed; for what right had she to make so wickedly false an insinuation in the hearing of my Douglas? But a glance at his face restrained me, and I held my tongue.

"Speak!" said Catherine, stamping her foot at me. "What is the meaning of it ? "

"I have no explanation, madam, excepting that I have done no wrong that I know of," I said. "My father and mother placed me in the care of the Count; it is surely no sin that I should desire to see my guardian from time to time?"

"Silence!" said Catherine, still flushed and angry. "I will have no assignations in the anteroom of my ladies. Let the

Count speak to you if he has business at the Court receptions, where all may

"This was no assignation, Highness," said Douglas; "I came uninvited. If there be any fault it lies at my door; the Countess is quite innocent."

I saw the angry face of the Tsarevna soften and change the instant that Douglas spoke; her lips smiled and her eyes assumed a tender expression.

"Nay, Douglas, not so," she said, "for Elsa should have reported to me your arrival; I would not have you kept waiting in the anteroom to be entertained by foolish maids, while I sit in ignorance of your presence. Nevertheless, since you have interfered on her behalf, I shall think no more of this matter. You have something to say to me, is it not so? Come within a while; it is late. but the Prince is not a keeper of early hours."

"I had business with the Countess this evening, not with your Highness," said Douglas sturdily, and oh, how proud I felt of his courage and honesty.

"So?" said the Grand Duchess, biting her lips to hide the vexation which the reply aroused in her; "then it is fortunate that you have finished, for, as it happens, there is a matter upon which I desire to consult you. Come within, Count Douglas.

Go to bed Elsa, little one, it is too late for children to be up, and you look pale and weary. Come, Douglas."

Douglas flushed but obeyed, following her Highness into her own reception room, but flashing a luminous smile at me as he disappeared.

Well—let the Grand Duchess woo her best, I angrily reflected, if woo she must! She would find my man too constant and too honest for her! Her fascinations and the glory—if glory it were and not shame!—of being obviously beloved by the Tsarevna were alike futile to destroy the perfect constancy of my Douglas!

Nevertheless, I did not retire to my bed-chamber as the Princess had suggested. On the contrary, I went out into the corridor that separated the apartments of the Grand Duke from our own portion of the Palace, in order to await the departure of Douglas, and to enjoy one word of farewell with him unwatched by jealous eyes.

And the minutes trailed wearily one after the other until they had made up the sum of a most dreary hour, and still Douglas did not come. The sentry at the end of the corridor watched me with curiosity, and wondered what could be my object in waiting here, and why I wept from time to time; though if he had asked me as to this latter riddle I should have been able to give him no satisfactory reply.

At last Douglas came.

He was flushed and haggard-looking, and his eyes, though apparently gazing straight in front of him, saw nothing; at any rate, he did not see me until I touched his arm and whispered his name.

"Elsa!" he muttered, starting violently, "you here? Why are you not in bed? What is the matter? You have been crying!"

"Nothing is the matter," I said, "and I am not thinking of crying; but, oh, Douglas, what shall we do, what shall we do?" and I proved how far I was from

any idea of weeping by bursting suddenly into floods of tears.

Douglas led me into a little room off the corridor, a mere alcove, where the eye of the sentry would not reach us, and we sat down. He embraced me tenderly.

"May God forgive me, Elsa," he groaned, "for bringing you among these people; in my ignorance I did it; this Court is no place for such as you! And yet, for my part, I cannot now desert the Prince, and, for your part, the Grand Duchess declares that she will not allow you to go, since you are, she says, the depository of many secrets."

"In any case, I should stay since you must remain, my Douglas," I said; "it is no hardship to be near you. I am allowed to see you but seldom, but if I were absent I should see you not at all."

"Nevertheless, it would be well if you were out of this Godless Court at any sacrifice. That woman, Elsa—but no! I will not speak of her."

"Nay, tell me all Douglas," I said.
"What! am I to hate her because she loves you? I should be the last to blame a woman for such a sin, if sin it be! If she had loved you first, then I should be the sinner."

Douglas laughed and pressed my hand. "You are generous and most pure," he said, "and I will say no more about the Grand Duchess, who has many splendid and admirable qualities. Since you are to continue to be her servant, continue also to love her, if you can."

"It is not so much love as fascination; I feel that I must give her my best service even when I am most angry with her or ashamed for her."

"It is an honourable feeling; you are loyal in spite of ill-treatment. As for me, after what has happened this night, I shall take care to see her Highness as little as possible."

"May I know more?" I asked.

"To what end, Elsa?" he said. "You may know this, however, and it is right



that you should; she is now aware that my heart is irrevocably bestowed upon another than herself, and that I can and will none of her; she professes to be unaware of the name of her rival, though she may suspect that you are she, and she will possibly ask you. Shall you renounce me at her bidding?"

"Oh, Douglas!" I murmured, reproachfully.

"I thought not," he continued; "but it you refuse there may be trouble for you."

"Let it come," I said; "I have done no wrong—she cannot harm me."

"God grant it prove so," said Douglas, gravely; "as for myself, her favour towards me cannot last long under the circumstances. Her love will turn to hatred—that is to be expected. We must be on our guard, Elsa."

"At any rate, we both know that in one another we can trust absolutely," I murmured, burying my face in the bosom of this man, whom the wiles and fascinations of an imperial princess could not seduce from his love for me.

I felt as I crept back to my own quarters that I would willingly die for Douglas. Ay! be torn in pieces for his sake! Did ever man before make so noble a sacrifice for the maiden he loved? For so, in my agitation, I regarded his repudiation of the advances of her High-Afterwards, on cooler reflection, I was more just to Douglas, and realised that he would scout the notion that he had made any sacrifice at all. refused to be another Poniatofsky, that was the sum of his "sacrifice." He had "sacrificed" the position of a Poniatofsky in order to remain a Douglas! How strangely, I thought, does one misview things in moments of excitement.

I was prepared to be summoned before the Grand Duchess on the following morning; and, sure enough, during the forenoon I received the expected intimation that her Highness desired to see me. I went, naturally, in some trepidation for I anticipated a stormy interview, and I was as much afraid of the Grand Duchess angry, as I was ever fascinated by the Grand Duchess amiable.

But her Highness received me, to my relief, most kindly.

"Ah, it is you, little Elschen," she said very pleasantly. "Well, I have sent for you because there are matters which must be discussed. I was unkind last night and hasty—nicht wahr?—never mind, little one, forget it; I meant no unkindness, but I was in great distress of mind, and indeed I knew not what I said. Tell me, Elsa, do you know what it is to be in love? Have you ever felt the sweet pain of the tender passion? Stay, I think you once told me that you had loved, but received no return. Then, my child, you will the better sympathise with me, for I, too, am in love, and, Grand Duchess though I be, my love is not at present returned."

"Your Highness is a married woman,' I began, "and——" the Princess interrupted me:

"Tut, child!" she said, stamping and flushing, "you would not have me in love with the Tsarevitch?"

"I meant, madam," I said as bravely as I could, "that the being a married woman must make your case all the harder for you; for naturally he whom you honour with your love must be embarrassed by that fact."

"Why so?" she said, coldly.

"Because the Tsarevitch is in the way," I said; "those who would accept and return your love must first greatly injure his Highness. There are those who might hesitate so to offend."

"Such offending would be no offence to my husband, who is himself an equal offender," said Catherine. "Neither is my lover restrained by such foolish considerations as you indicate; my case is a different one. Love is no respecter of persons, a princess may love a herd or a herd a princess; or the herd may love a village maiden, and though afterwards he be beloved by a princess, yet have no heart to give her in return, which latter is my case."

"It is very sad, Highness," I murmured.

"I have thought that maybe you might be of assistance to me in this matter, Elsa," she continued, smoothing my hair with her hand; "for, shall I own it, he to whom I have lost my heart is well known to you: he is Douglas, the sturdy Englishman, half German, who serves my husband." Her Highness paused, but I said nothing. She continued:

"Yes, it is this handsome Douglas who, one would say, being ambitious and, as all the world is aware, also susceptible to the smiles of women" (I winced at this, though I would have given the world to seem unconscious), "would have been glad to respond to that which I have to offer; yet, as I now learn, his heart, forsooth, is already bestowed, and, in a word, the fool is faithful."

"I blame him not for that, Highness!" I said as steadily as I could. "Can a man tear out his own heart at will, and live on?"

"Tut! let it be torn out for him if he cannot!" she replied. "Milkmaids must make room for Princesses. I am resolved to find out the name of this charmer of my Douglas, and she shall be approached. But first she must be found."

"What should she do, Highness?" I said faintly, though trying my best to wear a bold front.

"Make room, renounce him, since her betters require him; she shall have another—there is no lack of lovers."

"I think she whom Douglas loves will not be so easily moved!" I said, more firmly, angered by her Highness' arbitrary manner. "There are some who take love more seriously than your Highness."

"Then I was right, and you can help

me in this matter!" she smiled. "Come, Elschen, you shall tell me all you know; for I think I love this Douglas as well as you love that cold lover who, you tell me, loves not you. Ay! and perhaps more."

CHAPTER XVIII.

I was puzzled by the method of her Highness in the conduct of this conversation. That she was well aware of the true state of affairs I had little doubt; but why all this finesse? Why did she not go to the root of the matter and accuse me to my face of being the beloved of Douglas, and her rival?

I could only conclude that for some reason, best known to herself, the Grand Duchess did not desire to come to an open understanding upon the question, but rather to give me to understand in this crooked manner that I was in her way and must contrive to get from her path in any fashion that should best commend itself to me.

But this was not to my taste. If her Highness would have me make a renunciation in her favour she should say so plainly, I thought, in order that I might as plainly refuse. There could be no profit in dallying with the rain drops, better face the storm and get thoroughly wet once for all, if drenched I must be.

I therefore concluded to make a bold dash for a plain understanding.

"But, madam," I said, "I love and am beloved. He whom I thought cold has since avowed his passion."

"Ah, lucky child!" said her Highness; "you are more fortunate, then, than poor I! And who is this happy lover—stay—let me guess—Alexis Orlof? Ah! you blush, am I right? Well, the match shall have my approval; he is a splendid man!"

"No, Highness, it is not Alexis Orlof, and that, I think, you know!" I faltered. She frowned.

"What—Katkoff, then? So Katkoff is forgiven the former ardour of his passion and restored to favour. Bravo, little one!

I like to see it; the sin of too much love is easily forgiven!"

"Your Highness is well aware that I loathe and despise that man," I said, flushing.

The Grand Duchess looked angry; she began to understand that I would have this matter out with her and refused to accept her hints.

"Then I am at a loss, and will guess no more," she said; "and, indeed, I am not so intent upon knowing, if it be a secret. Doubtless, your lover is a young Zerbster of whom I know nothing, and for whom I care even less. It is enough, you may depart, Elsa, and see that your tongue does not wag; what we have said to-day is for no other ears than ours."

"Alas! madam," I gasped in desperation, "all is not yet said, nor can I depart until said it is, to the very last word. It is neither Katkoff nor Orlof that I love, as you must well know, but one who is dear to both of us; who loved me before ever he saw your Highness, else, as I freely own, it must have been otherwise with his love."

"You dare to avow to me that Douglas loves you?" said the Grand Duchess; looking very black. "Is it so? Is this your boasted faithfulness to me? I suspected it, but I would have spared you the pain of confession and of further plain speaking which must follow confession. This man, you avow, loves you, and his love for you, you presume to suggest, stands between him and me. It shall not so stand, believe me, for I will have no rivals."

"Alas! Highness, what can I do? I sobbed. "Could I change his heart, if I would?"

"Assuredly! Have I not shown you the way, but you were too blind to see it? From this day you renounce Douglas; he is not for you."

"He will not believe that I have renounced him; he knows that I love him. It is impossible, Highness." "Not so; he shall be made to believe it. I am grieved if you must suffer pain, child; it is your misfortune, and mine also, for I have a sympathetic heart, and in causing pain to others I suffer it equally. Come, Elsa, little one, you shall do this much for me; you will not refuse."

"I do refuse," I said; "I will never be a party to so detestable a bargain!"

The Grand Duchess glared at me like a tigress; I saw in her eyes that glassiness which sometimes, in moments of rage, made her resemble the fierce beasts.

"You are a fool," she said, "and an obstinate one; I had not thought you so stubborn. It would have been wiser to yield with a good grace, since I must in the end prevail, To-morrow you shall be escorted on your way homewards; there is no room for you and me in this city. Make your dispositions to day."

"Where I go, Douglas will follow!" I said desperately.

"You lie," said Catherine. "Douglas will remain, and in a week you shall be forgotten; it is the way of men."

"It is not the way of Douglas!" I cried, "your Highness will see. My Douglas is upright and brave; you will not seduce him with your wicked arts, which he loathes and despises."

I think the Grand Duchess intended to strike me, she strode towards me looking like a Fury, and I lost heart and darted from the room.

I fled to my own chamber feeling that all was lost—my career for certain—and likely enough, love and all happiness also. What had I done and said in my agitation? I could not recall much of the interview, but that I had permanently and hopelessly estranged my mistress was quite certain. And yet, what should I have done or said which I had not said? I could not promise to renounce my Douglas, and nothing but such a promise would have satisfied her Highness.

Verily Destiny had determined to ruin



me once and for all, and Douglas also, and what had we done to deserve it, excepting to be loyal and faithful in love?

All that evening I lay weeping and trembling upon my bed, in momentary fear that they would come to arrest and bear me away upon some plea against which I should be unable to offer any defence.

But no one came to arrest me. Only late in the evening, Olga brought me a scrap of paper inscribed by the Grand Duchess with these words:

"I have reconsidered the matter of your return to Zerbst. You shall stay on. It may be that submission to the inevitable will follow a careful consideration of the matter at issue."

This little note cheered and comforted me. The Grand Duchess had at any rate realised that when I said Douglas would follow me if I were sent away I had spoken but the truth.

What would her Highness do next, I wondered, and what, meanwhile, could I do? Oh, for an opportunity to see Douglas, and to consult with him; but of one thing I was quite certain, amid many uncertainties, and that was that her Highness would take care to keep us two apart.

I did not sleep that night, for there was sufficient care upon me to banish all thought of rest. And, I suppose, I showed signs of the anguish through which I had passed, for the Grand Duchess, whom I attended as usual in the morning, rallied me kindly upon my appearance.

"Come, Elsa, howl no more for the moon," she said, kissing me. "I would spare you pain if I could. Is there nothing will satisfy you but to defy the mistress who loves you?"

"I ask but my own," I murmured; "I defy no one, Highness."

"Nay, for if the Grand Duchess should desire that which you might otherwise claim as your own, to claim it in the face of her wishes were a defiance." "Then I must defy," I said, "for I cannot willingly renounce."

"Should not the Tsarevna have first claim in all matters over her loyal subjects and servants?"

"Love is exempted," I said, "from all rules; the peasant has as much right to his love as the Tsar himself."

"You forget," replied her Highness, smiling, "that the Tsars of Russia have ever claimed the right of choosing the fairest maiden for their own; did they consider, think you, whether the maiden they honoured by their choice were already beloved by any lesser lover? Assuredly not! And the maidens themselves, be certain, raised no objection to be chosen."

"If the Grand Duchess sought a husband it would be different," I said; "but you, Highness, seek not a husband, which you have already. It is no honourable gift you have to offer, as the Tsars to the maidens!"

Catherine stamped her foot, and I thought for a moment that she would fly, as yesterday, into anger; but she retained control of herself and smiled again. This was to be a campaign of kindness, since terror, she found, had failed to move me

"You speak well, child, and I love you none the worse for it. But see here, that which I have to offer Douglas the world may call honourable or dishonourable; what is that to me? I desire his love, and I will have it. This is not a question which is sub judice; if obstinacy from your side could contribute to your happiness, I should bid you hold fast to your Douglas; but I know my own mind, and I tell you, therefore, that the faster you now hold to him the greater will be the wrench when you are parted, as parted you must be."

"We shall never part willingly," I said; "and moreover, madam, be warned of this, that even if you should overcome weak me in this matter, there remains strong Douglas. Never think that you can force his love by watering it with my tears. What will my ruined happiness profit you, if Douglas still remains obstinate? He loves you not now, and he will love you still less then."

"You are a little fool, and know nothing of the ways of men; in love all men are alike, and all pliable as wax in the hands of the cunning artificer."

"I am content to trust my Douglas!".
I said.

"Then trust him altogether. Say that you renounce him, and you shall see what will come of it: in a week you shall be forgotten."

"I will never renounce him," I insisted; "if your Highness can win him from me, then win him. Must I assist in despoiling my own heart of its life-blood?"

"So be it, then," said the Grand Duchess, assuming her stately manner; "you defy me. I would have had peace, but you insist upon war; then war let it be. Go you your way and I shall go mine, and we shall see who is stronger. Do not blame me if I prove the winner in this duel; I tell you beforehand that it is not a fair fight, for my arm is longer than yours. I ask you for the last time—will you renounce this man? It were wiser in the end to do so; think again."

"Never, Highness. Take him from me by force, if you can; but of free-will I shall never relinquish him."

"So you defy me?"

"If defiance it be, I defy you."

"You are a little fool, and I shall win," said her Highness with a laugh; "but I can afford to be generous, being the stronger, and I like you none the less for your spirit. Now, farewell, and be on guard, little tiger-cat!"

I bowed low and departed, pleased, on the whole, with the result of the interview. So it was to be war to the knife—little helpless I against this all-powerful adversary! Was I not hopeless

and desperate now that I was committed absolutely to resistance?

In all honesty I declare that I was neither hopeless nor inclined to despair. I was strong and full of fight; strong in the strength of my Douglas, who, I told myself with pride and joy, would never suffer defeat even though I were to be worsted at every point of the fight.

There was something exhilarating in the position. I felt happier than I should have thought possible under the circumstances.

CHAPTER XIX.

How her Highness the Grand Duchess intended to proceed in the campaign which she had announced against my happiness I had, of course, no idea whatever; but I was not long left in doubt, and the nature of her first move I should certainly never have guessed. Indeed, I entertained a better opinion of my mistress than to suppose her capable of so cunning and wicked a device as that which she employed, within a very few hours of the declaration of war, in order to bring about my ruin.

How shall I describe what happened; even now I can scarcely recall the exact sequence of events, so suddenly did disaster overtake me, and so unexpectedly.

It was a Sunday, and I was busy over my devotions in the Lutheran Church in the Nessky Prospect, when a servant of the Court, whom I knew well, entered the building and began to peer about among the worshippers—of whom there were many present, since the Grand Duke's Holsteiners and their wives were all attached to this community. Seeing that the man belonged to the Court of the Grand Duchess, sew of whose adherents would be present here besides myself, I concluded that the man might be searching for me, and I left my place to ask him whom he sought.

"Yourself, Excellence," he said; "her Highness has sent you this, and bids me say that the troika awaits you in the street."

I took the note from the fellow's hands and tore it open; it ran as follows:

"The weather being so fine, the Empress has commanded a sledge party to Peterhof. Overtake us if you can; I forbid you to remain behind, since his Highness and his attendants are not of the party."

I could not help laughing as I read this naïve intimation that I was not to be trusted in the same town with Douglas, the Grand Duchess being absent; but there was no question of disobeying orders, and seeing the troika—which is a sledge drawn by three horses abreast-at the door, I prepared to jump into it and drive away. Was it fancy, or did I really see Douglas's pale face among the crowds of interested or wearied faces that were turned in the direction of the worthy but prosy Lutheran Pastor, whose longwinded oration from the pulpit had been in process of delivery at the moment of my departure? Douglas did occasionally attend the church; we had met here more than once or twice.

If so, it was annoying to be obliged to depart, leaving behind this opportunity of an interview with Douglas; but herein was the artfulness of the Grand Duchess made manifest; I was to leave the building in the midst of the service in order that any such meeting might be frustrated.

With a sigh I sprang into the comfortable three-horsed sledge. The driver moved his reins and shouted to his horses; these darted merrily forward, and in a moment we were a hundred yards away, gliding deliciously over the frozen snow in the very luxury of motion—fast and smoothly. A motion to make the heart beat gladly, and the blood to flow briskly in the veins.

I had no suspicion of any sort of treachery. The Grand Duchess was playing her own game, no doubt, in getting me out of town, but this much she had artlessly avowed; I did not dream of any subtler designs. The February sun was in full blaze, and his beams made of the face of the country a veritable fairyland; for there had been a slight thaw at night, and this had produced a delicate rime on the pine trees, which the frost had since crystallised, and which the sunshine now glorified into a very filigree of silver set in a million of flashing diamonds. The air was exhilarating and delicious; how could any evil thought or suspicion come to mar the pure delight of such a drive as this? I never for one moment suspected that I was, in truth, taking the first fatal step towards that ruin which Catherine had set herself to bring about upon me.

Peterhof lies on the direct road to Oranienbaum, and when we reached the former village my driver, to my surprise, did not turn aside to the gates of the Palace, but drove straight on towards Oranienbaum.

"Stop!" I cried. "Kooda lyézeesh, where are you driving to?" The man pulled up.

"Oranienbaum, Excellence," he said.

"No, no; it is at Peterhof her Highness intends to take lunch," I said, in surprise. "See, here are the instructions."

"Mine say Oranienbaum, Excellence," said the fellow, producing a tumbled scrap of paper upon which the words "Oranienbaumsky dvorets" (Palace of Oranienbaum) were certainly scribbled.

"There is a mistake somewhere," I said; "drive into the Palace grounds here first, and we shall see who is right."

The man shook his head and then scratched it. Then he turned the horses' heads, and did as he was bidden.

But at Peterhof there had been no intimation of the intended arrival of the Imperial sledge party, and I could only conclude that her Highness had accidentally written "Peterhof," whereas she had intended to write Oranienbaum.

So on to this latter place we pursued

our way, and in half an hour or so we reached the outer park, and pulled up at the gates of that lodge, of which mention has already been made during the course of this history.

The gates were locked, and only a small side door was open. Leaving the sledge without, I passed through this door in order to rouse the lodge-keeper-who had not appeared to the shouts of my driverand bid him unfasten the gates. It was curious that he should have locked them, seeing that the Imperial party must have driven through them but an hour or so before, though possibly the cavalcade might have passed round the park and entered the Palace at the yard side. At any rate I would rouse the lodge-keeper, whom I knew, and bid him keep his eyes open in case they should return this way, lest he get himself into trouble. I knocked, therefore, loudly at the lodge door, for I remembered that this was Sunday, a prazdnik, or holiday, and that this orthodox person would probably be orthodoxically tipsy, after the manner of his tribe.

But the door was opened promptly enough, only there stood before me, not Ivan, the lodge-keeper, but the man of all others that I most feared and hated, the guardsman, Katkoff.

Katkoff bowed and smiled. His face was flushed; he had been drinking.

"Ha! welcome, Fraulein. The party of her Highness has been at the last moment postponed. You and I are the only representatives; it is too bad that we should have been allowed to come all this distance to be disappointed in the end."

I heard no more. A mist seemed to form before my eyes; the man's voice sounded far away.

I turned, and tried to make for my sledge, but, to complete my horror and despair, I saw that it was no longer at the gates—this was part of the arrangement, no doubt—the vehicle was already gone.

My head swam, a sudden spasm of pain seemed to divide my heart, I fell up against the park gates, and fainted.

When I recovered consciousness I was within the lodge, a rough, one-roomed building, like a peasant's cottage, and scarcely more luxuriously furnished. I lay upon the floor, and as I passed my eyes over the room, I could see Katkoff attending to the stove, piling in wood at the open door of it, with his back turned to me. I felt in my breast for the dagger which Douglas had restored to me, but it was gone. That had been Katkoff's first care then.

And I was absolutely and hopelessly in the power of this man.

So far as my bewildered and half-paralysed understanding could grasp the situation, there was no single thing that I could do to protect myself; I was alone with this wretch, who would certainly show me no mercy. I prayed for help, but in my dazed condition I found myself praying more to Douglas than to my Maker, beginning with a prayer to the Almighty that Douglas might come and save me from Katkoff, and ending with a supplication to Douglas that he would so come.

Katkoff was chopping the billets of wood with a small hatchet, and upon the hatchet I now fixed my imagination. Once or twice he looked round at me, but I was always in time to close my eyes, and he did not suspect that I was not in reality still unconscious. Even when he came and stood over me, and bade me rouse myself, and called me a beautiful little she-devil, and kissed me on the forehead, I did not stir, not stand up and spit at the hound, as I should have longed to do, but for the hatchet.

Presently, having finished chopping his wood, Katkoff carried out the portion which he did not require for the stove, remaining one instant without, and then returning to the room. But in that instant I had possessed myself of the

weapon, and when he returned, it was to find me erect and armed, a victim that would fight to the death, and perhaps his death, before she should be overborne.

I cannot describe the rage I felt towards this man; the sudden shock of the discovery that I had been outwitted and betrayed by him, and that, but for the accident of the axe, I might have been an utterly helpless victim in his hands enraged me, now that the shock was over, beyond the power of utterance. moved a finger towards me at this moment I should have struck at him with the axe, and killed him if I could. But Katkoff was startled and taken aback by the unexpected apparition of my armed self; his countenance fell, and assumed a paler hue, though he made a show of laughing gaily.

"Come near me, if you dare, you coward," I hissed.

"Not I," he laughed, "why should I? I will wait until your anger evaporates; for you will develop a milder spirit presently, and then you will appreciate the depth of love which has braved your anger in order to be near the object of its worship."

"See that you come not too near that object," I said, as calmly as I could bring myself to speak; "for I am desperate, and, before God, I will cleave your skull if you give me the chance!"

"Tut, little tiger-cat, you look admirable when you are angry, but in tender mood you are perfect. Come, sit downand calm yourself, and let us talk reasonably. You shall marry me if you will an hour hence! By this time to-morrow we shall laugh that there can ever have been anger between us."

"By this time to-morrow I shall be free for ever from the abomination of your presence, either by your dying or my own," I said.

"Oh, oh!" he cried," why talk of death? I have made preparations here for feasting

and marriage—the bridal feast. Ha! ha! there is a priest in the village——"

"Death shall be your bride sooner than I," I said. "Your bride or my husband."

"Come," he cried, assuming gaiety, though I could see that my attitude disconcerted him, "this is grim jesting. May I not claim a little love, I that have faithfully adored you for two years or near it?"

"I never asked your love. I would as soon be wooed by the evil one as by you, Katkoff. Do not profane the name of love again, lest you provoke me to fall upon you with the axe."

"No, no, I am not to be terrorised," he laughed. "My sword is longer than your axe. I should have you at mercy if it came to that; but we will kiss, not strike!"

I dared speak no more. I should have burst into tears of pure, helpless rage if I had. I rested my back against the wall and stood watching the man.

Katkoff sat down, shrugging his shoulders.

"I will wait awhile," he said. "Wisdom comes with hunger."

So I stood and he sat, neither speaking for an hour; and I saw plainly that my watching greatly angered and disconcerted him. Suddenly he rose and made for the door, but this I would not permit, for I must not be locked in and famished into submission.

"Stay where you are," I said. "If you turn your back, even for an instant, to open the door, I will cut you down."

"Curse you for a little tigress!" he said, laughing harshly. "I grow hungry, let me fetch food for us both, and wine. There is plenty without."

"Turn your back upon me if you will," I said. "I have warned you!"

But Katkoff reflected and remained where he was.

I began to faint for hunger and my limbs to ache for weariness. A second

hour passed, and a third. Katkoff grew restless and angry.

"Come," he said; "enough and too much of this foolery. Will you be reasonable of your own wisdom, or must I teach you by force? It is not every man who would offer you marriage; I offer it. Come, I weary of this foolishness, let us eat and drink, and then we will go seek the old priest in the village—come, I say!

He rose and made a step towards me.. I spat at him and abused him, calling him liar and coward, and many shameful names, and daring him to touch me with his foul hands.

Katkoff cursed and fingered his sword, looking very dark and evil. I multiplied my insults upon him, for I felt that if he did not bring this matter to an issue soon, I should not have strength to fight my fight. But Katkoff cursed, and

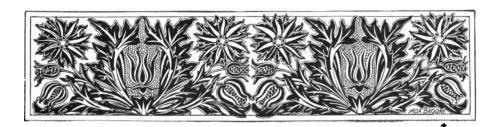
laughed, and cursed again, and then sat down.

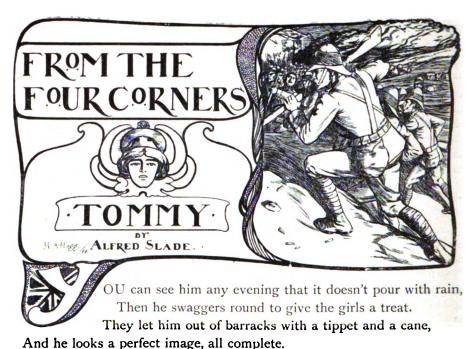
"I will starve you out," he said. "We shall see who will win this game which you insist upon playing."

The wood in the stove all burned out; it was bitterly cold and began to grow dark. Katkoff lighted a candle, but presently blew it out again. I could scarcely see him now, and my head began to swim with faintness and hunger.

I opened my mouth and abused him again, using all the most shameful words I had ever heard, hoping to rouse him. I even advanced towards him, intending to attack him; but he laughed and stretched his sword so that the end of it touched my breast, while I was not nearly within striking distance of him. I burst into tears and retired to the wall once more. I should faint in a minute or two, I knew.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]





They put his feet in bluchers, a mile or so too big,
And his trousers fit him every time they touch;
He's a fright all ways he's seen, but he represents the Queen,
And you'll please to be polite to him as such.

For he's the sort that's won the British Empire.

At home he's just a nuisance, and he knows it;

But take him where there's fun, and he's got his little gun,

Give him the pace to go, and Tommy goes it.

He's an outrage to æsthetics, with his forelock soaped down flat,

And he wears a small tea-cosy, stuck on sideways, for a hat;

But there's a Queen's Own Soldier underneath—remember that;

And that's the sort that's won the British Empire.

You can meet him in the moonshine with a girl at either side,
And a dozen more are hanging on behind;
He's proud of his attractions, and he doesn't try to hide
And if you think it's shocking, he don't mind.
He finds it very nat'ral, he don't see no need to blush,
It's been the same since soldiers first began;
He's not a chip of wood, he's built of flesh and blood,
And that's the way you want to have a man.

And it's the sort that's won the British Empire.

He's a fair disgrace to morals, he'll believe it;

But stand him in a Square, and tell him to stay there,

And you'll have to cut him up before he'll leave it.

You can starve him, you can freeze him, but he don't know when he's dead.

You can puncture him with bay'nets, you can fill him up with lead, But the beggar won't lie down and quit—his heart and liver's red; And that's the sort that's won the British Empire.

You can come across him when the public-houses start to close,
And they catch him by the neck and throw him out;
He'll take it like a lamb, if they don't mess up his clothes,
And they fetch a policeman when he wants to shout.
Then he staggers home to barracks, and they book it beastly drunk,
And he does his cells, and's happy just the same;
But see him at the Front, with his back up in the brunt,
And that's the time to watch him play the game.

Playing the game that's won the British Empire.

He's a wrong 'un when he's idle, and he's told it;

But show him foes to fight, and he'll manage that all right,

Give him the flag to hold, and see him hold it.

Tell him the Widder wants him, and he's ready, staunch and true,

And he stands up like a Briton by the Red, and White, and Blue.

Ready! Ay, and waiting! For another Waterloo;

He's the same old breed that's won the British Empire.

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been told by a sage, who had himself read widely and deeply, to read none but old and famed books, and assuredly

-to look at it from another

point of view—it is no less pleasant than When, too, a scholar pretime thrifty. pares a new edition of some "old and famed book," and gives us the full benefit of all his studies reduced to essentials, then it is that we can best appreciate that "economy of time," on which Emerson, not unwisely, laid some stress. Two centuries ago there lived in England a gossiping writer who appears to have foreshadowed the personal paragrapher of the present day; his name was John Aubrey, and though his Brief Lives have long been familiar to readers in literary byways and to students of 17th century history, they have had to wait until this present year for publication in a complete and definitive Now, however, thanks to the edition. scholarship and painstaking zeal of Dr. Andrew Clark, we have, in two handsome vols., the Brief Lives, chiefly of Contemporaries, set down by John Aubrey, between the vears 1669 and 1696 (Clarendon Press). To the idler a work such as this has a very real fascination; to turn over the leaves

and read varied bits of information about the most diverse characters; to find now a comparatively long account of Edmund Waller, and then a brief one of William Shakespeare; to find notices—now of two lines, and then of two or more pages—of men whose names would long since have passed away with the crumbling of their tombstones had not Aubrey, with the readiness of a Captain Cuttle, made a note of what he had heard about them. One of the charms of the work is that the writer was often not content with a single account of a man's life, but readily supplemented it with another when such came in his way. This, of course, means that he jotted down contemporary hearsay, and that we must often be careful in accepting his statements as historically accurate. For example, having told us that the poet Waller was born at Coleshill (a small bit of Hertfordshire inset in Buckinghamshire) he proceeds later to tell us that he was born at Beaconsfield, "in the fair brick house, the farthest on the left hand as you goe to Wickham." But, as the editor has well pointed out, Aubrey's Brief Lives can never be considered as a biographical dictionary; their value lies not so much in the facts stated as in the vivid personal touche which we get, either directly from Aubr ey

knowledge of the men of whom he writes, or indirectly from his informants. work is not a reference book, it is something far better; it is a veritable bit of the 17th century laid before whoso chooses to become acquainted with it, and as such it is very gratifying to have it presented to us in so fine a fashion as is now done, thanks to the thoroughness of the editor and of the printers. Curious, too, is much of the information upon which we light in these attractive pages. For example, we learn that -and the fact will interest many more people than are familiar with his poetry— "Sir John Suckling invented the game of cribbidge. He sent his card to all gameing places in the country, which were marked with private markes of his: he got 20,000 li. by this way." Aubrey wrote many of his minute biographies for the Athenæ Oxoniensis of his friend Anthony Wood, and did not consider that sufficient credit was given to him for his assistance: he therefore deposited his MSS, in the personal custody of the keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, and it is from those various MSS. that Dr. Clark has now given us in a complete form Aubrey's Brief Assuredly has the whirligig of time brought about its revenge.

A Hunting M.P.

That we are a sport-loving nation is a fact generally conceded by all Englishmen,

even by the wit who described himself as an athlete on the strength of his being a proficient at the noble and manly exercise of backgammon! This being so a book of Hunting Reminiscences such as that just prepared for the delectation of readers by Mr. A. E. Pease, M.P. (Thacker & Co.), is likely to meet with ready patronage "in all the libraries," and, indeed, it well deserves to do so, for that it is thoroughly entertaining may at once be admitted by an Idler who knows more about the "points" of a book than of a horse, and has much experience in hunting biblical treasures through the "fourpenny boxes" of the metropolis and

none in hunting the fox through "the counties." It is perhaps scarcely fair to judge a volume such as this from the purely literary standpoint, for it is not as literature that it appeals to the attention of readers, but as a bright record of some of the experiences of an ardent fox-hunter. Mr. Pease's book deserves to find many readers, and those who take it up will like it the better for some of its admirable illustrations, of which we are enabled to give a spirited example in the accompanying sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

To lovers of amiable More Old gossip, mixed in somewhat Time Gossip. the manner of a salad, with sport representing the eggs at the top, I can recommend Records of Old Times (Chatto & Windus), by J. Kersley Fowler. The book contains a good deal of information, a large number of anecdotes, and is exceedingly good-humoured and garrulous. Mr. Fowler knows the beautiful Vale of Aylesbury well, and is commendably loyal to it. His description of the "White Hart" at Aylesbury, as it was in the early days of this century, shows how hopelessly we have retrograded in the matter of inns. The glories of the old posting-house have departed, the old cellars are empty of their old vintages, the old host has departed for ever, and in his place, alas! reigns another whom our grandfathers knew not. Where now shall you find a hostelry with great open galleries, oak pillars, a private fish-pond, and an orchard with "fine apple and pear trees, amongst the former being codlins, golden and ribston pippins, Blenheim orange, russets, and early juneatings; amongst the latter Gansell's bergamot, several of the beurrés, and a large tree of the real old bergamot pear?" Mr. Fowler tells us also, quaintly, that in one part of the garden seats "pervaded a shrubbery charming to behold." How delicious to have seen those seats "pervade!" There s an exceedingly interesting chapter on



Drawn by the late Sir Frank Lockwood, M.P. (By permission of W. Thacker & Co.)

turnpikes and turnpike trusts, and the sporting reminiscences are innumerable; indeed, Mr. Fowler must be credited with having done good practical work in the interests of honest and genuine sport.

The book makes no pretence to literary style, but it is eminently readable; and a certain naïveté in the narrator gives a refreshing piquancy to many passages, as where, for instance, in writing of the year 1784, Mr. Fowler says: "I have every reason to believe that the system of bribery tainted the whole kingdom at Parliamentary elections at that time." Mr. Fowler has certainly every reason to believe what all the world knows for fact!

The Thirty Days' War.

Mr. H. W. Nevinson, who was one of the Daily Chronicle's correspondents

in Greece during the war, has given a fuller account of his experiences during that unhappy campaign in Scenes in the Thirty Days' War between Greece and Turkey (J. M. Dent & Co.). It is an admirable narrative, easy, vivid, full of colour and force, and, from a man of confessed Philhellenic sympathies, singularly free from prejudice. To such an one, indeed, the thirty days' drama must have been a terrible exercise in disappointment; from the first the affair was hopeless; the sight of Athens a few hours before the outbreak of hostilities must have lamentably suggested the beginning of a farce. mere presence of the Irregulars was enough to have disorganised a much stronger army than that of Greece. Rapsáni Mr. Nevinson found the headquarters of a colonel who commanded the frontier from the sea to Tyrnavos:

"There was a battalion of the Line and a few companies of Evzoni, the mountaineer troops, which are clad in the national dress of red cap, black and white jacket with white sleeves, white fustanella or kilt, and long white stockings to the top of their thighs. Their officers are dressed like ordinary officers of the Line, because a Greek officer may at any

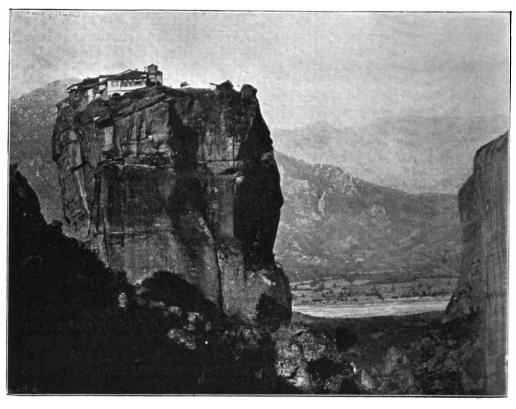
moment be changed from one regiment to another. Nothing more demoralising could be imagined. And, in fact, when the war came, I found that even the company officers were as often as not entire strangers to their men."

What, one asks, what but disaster could come of a system which any intelligent child would condemn as absurd? As for the Irregulars, they changed about from company to company at their own sweet will, and were not even officered by Greeks. The National Society (Ethnike Hetairia) "was supposed to pay through the captain for rations and all necessaries. But directly action began the whole system completely broke down. The men either starved or lived upon the peasants, and on doles from the pitiful."

The retreat upon Arta and the utter panic and demoralisation that followed are described by Mr. Nevinson with a skill and precision, a simplicity and strength, not often to be found in such narratives; it is a sickening story of incompetence and panic -position after position left undefended which might have been held by a couple of disciplined battalions; men leaving the trenches and flying with the mob; officers incapable and as panic-stricken as their men. It was well that the wretched business should come to an end. "At seven o'clock, lo! from our great battery on the barrack hill a white flag flew, and it was answered by a white flag on Imaret. The Thirty Days' War was over."

Altogether, this is a profoundly interesting book, good literature as well as good history; it is not all gloom, for it contains much observation of character, and fine descriptive passages covering classic ground. It does not, I confess, stir in me any desire to become a war-correspondent, but it demands my thanks to one who sees so clearly and writes so well.

I have two volumes of verse lying upon my table in friendly nearness to one another. The first I take up is *Porphyrion*, by Laurence Binyon (Grant Richards). To be



A monastery in Meteora, with the Peneus and part of Pindus.

(From "The Thirty Days' War," by H. W. Nevinson. J. M. Dent & Co.)

perfectly candid at the outset, I am disappointed in *Porphyrion* and its companion verses. The poem has a certain dignity, a gravity of Miltonic diction, a sense of form, but it leaves me unmoved, uninterested, with the feeling that I have read a very creditable exercise in verse, but no more. It has no movement, no blood, as it were; it is too remote from life, too lavish of cold adornments, too deliberate. In a word, it lacks that impulse which makes verse cling in the memory and live. There are lines here and there, too, which limp deplorably; such an one as this, for instance:

"Instantly he forgot all his despair," which is sheer prose and makes the ear shiver.

But, in spite of what I must consider almost fatal faults in the poem as a whole, there are passages of delicate beauty and imagination. The following lines are admirable:

"For from the blown dust to the extremest hills,
Audible silence, that sustained despair,
A ceiling over all immovable,
Presided; and the desert, nourishing
That silence, listened, jealous of a sound
Younger than her unageing solitude;
The desert, that was old when earth was young."

But this, you will observe, is impersonal; when it comes to human matters, Mr. Binyon is still dealing as with an abstraction, with the shows of life, not with life itself. The same weakness, it seems to me, mars "The Supper," a poem excellent in conception. Mr. Binyon states his argument thus: "A rich youth invites a chance company of guests from the street—a blind beggar, a sandwich-man, a tramp, two women, and a thief, all fallen

in the world; they are seated at supper in a sumptuous room." Here is ample material for contrast, character, the glow and grime of life; but you only get them in meagre measure, and with none of the dramatic insight of the man who has truly handled and seen.

Of the other poems in the volume I like best "The Fire" and "Martha." Such verses as "Lament" and "Fears of Love" bring me back to the statement that Mr. Binyon seems to have no impulse, no lyric gift; and "In the Firelight" strikes me as showing him deficient in a sense of humour.

The second volume of verse which has submitted to my paper-knife is Welsh Ballads (David Nutt), by Ernest Rhys. The book is by no means ambitious, at any rate in the sense in which we have accustomed ourselves to use the word; it has no great "subject" poem, neither has it any of the paint and patches of a bedraggled modern muse; but it does contain a refreshing quantity of genuine poetry, a little indefinite, perhaps, with something of the indefiniteness of wind and cloud and flying shadow, but with much of the beauty of all three. In some half dozen of these poems there is the genuine lyric lilt, in a few of the ballads the simplicity and dignity of an earlier age. In the main, they are not concerned with any philosophy of life, but with the beauty of simple things, the glamour of misty hills, the joy of fighting warrior, or lament of native bard.

Mr. Rhys does not write for those who like their poetry in slabs, neither does he adventure into unknown seas and return with broken rudder and shredded sails; he takes what lies to his hand, and, with the exception of an occasional lapse, uses it artistically. Yet I do not think his verse has any of the elements of popularity; its appeal can only be to the few, but in that fact I imagine Mr. Rhys will find no reason for a moment's discouragement. It is verse which makes the

of its appeal by subtle suggestions of colour or aspect, mood or temperament; you must see through the writer's eyes, be of his faith, as it were.

"In a winter's dream, on Gamélyn moor,
I found the lost grave of Lord Glyndwr.

Three shadows I followed against the moon, That marched while the grey reeds whistled the tune.

Three swordsmen they were, out of Harry's wars,

That made a Welsh song of their Norman scars."

The second couplet is wonderfully suggestive and good in the indefinite manner to which I have already referred.

I quote four stanzas from "The Fairy Mass," a poem, however, which should be read as a whole for its true effect:

"The Bells are ringing for Fairy Mass,
The birchwood leaves between:
And the birches see the Fairies pass,
In jerkins grey and green.
But the Church of the soulless Fairies, no one has ever seen.

"No one may find the Fairy door,
But there came a subtler smell
Than e'er was brewed from the forest store,
And the dead leaves in the well:
And there came upon the wind again the chime
of an elfin bell.

"But now the first wild wing of fire
Flies from the mountain tops;
The wood-doves coo; and a fainter choir
Is heard as the elf-bell stops—
A hymn that can never to heaven, but dies in the hazel copse.

"The little people weep within,
As they hark to the Holy Mass:
At heart they pray for the mortal sin
Of man, that lets him pass
The Bridge of Dread; for the Fairies tire, they
tire of the reed and the grass."

There is more work in the volume almost, if not quite, as good as this; and two poems, "Mari's Saturday Nights," of an entirely different character, that, to me at any rate, show another side of Mr.

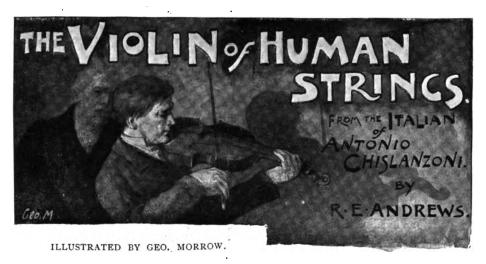
Rhys' accomplishment; they are, in their kind, perfect, and of a pathos real and unstrained.

I am accustomed to unconscious farce in novels, where it was never intended and is certainly not amusing; Mr. Hichens, in The Londoners (Heinemann), has set himself to the working out of a deliberate farce, and it is very amusing indeed. I feel genuinely grateful for the book because it made me laugh; not a perfunctory laugh, but now and then a candid roar. Mr. Hichens calls his exercise an absurdity, which is a sufficiently accurate label for it; but it is more than an absurdity, it is a wild frolic conducted with a kind of mad gusto. The first three chapters are in the spirit of comedy rather than farce, but after that the author seems to have let himself go with a chuckle and a dash; the people are not unreal exactly, but they are continually being forced into situations in which no human soul could appear anything but ridiculous. the end of the story the complications become too grotesque even for farce; one begins to grow a little weary; even the remarkable Mr. Bush palls. Judged merely as an absurdity, the only fault I have to find with The Londoners is that it is too long; the fooling becomes rather too thin. the effort too obvious; at times one grows Still, it is a book to read and laugh over, to recommend to one's friends and expect them to be grateful.

At the same time it is an experiment that will hardly bear repeating; but I imagine Mr. Hichens is much too wise to make the attempt.

As soon as I had got over the repugnance excited by the cover of The Cattle Man (Grant Richards) and over my annoyance at the discovery that it was apparently printed upon blotting-paper, I read Mr. Burgin's story with interest and approval. Most of the characters in it are alive, in spite of frequent over-emphasis and exaggeration, and much of the observation is true so far as it goes. I mean that Mr. Burgin keeps his eyes open in one direction, and either closes them, or fails to use them, in another. stance, the cattle-boat and the old birdstuffer's shop in this story are very well done, but the relations between Cranby Miller and Angiolina Shote seem to me practically impossible, at any rate on the man's side. But whatever Mr. Burgin's faults may be, and many of them seem the result of carelessness in regard to the balance of his work, he tells his story with unflagging spirit. He has the gift of narrative, an eye for types, and command of an easy, if somewhat indiscreet, dialogue. he would only purge his work of trivialities, avoid the pitfalls of a too narrow humour, and seek earnestly after a truer standard of art, we should have much better books from him than The Cattle Man, vigorous and good though that is.





T was in the year 1831. Paganini, the incomparable Paganini, had been performing at the Opera, where he had given six concerts, exciting an enthusiasm even greater than that which had accompanied him during his triumphal tours in Italy and Germany. His reception in Paris baffles description: at each performance the crowded house had been moved to a pitch of excitement rarely witnessed even among Parisians-nor was this emotional demonstration confined merely to the audience, for, some orchestral professors of the great theatre, carried away by this master genius-who seemed to exercise a magic spell wherever he went—actually threw down their instruments before the Now there was in Paris just great artist. at this time another violinist, named Franz Sthoeny, a man who was gifted with unusual ability, but was, nevertheless, quite ignorant of the great world of art.

Born at Stuttgart—where he had been quietly brought up—Franz had passed his time in that city alternating the severe meditations of philosophy with exercises on the four-stringed instrument. At thirty-five years of age he had lost both parents, and was alone in the world. On the death of his mother, who had adored him, and exhausted all the savings of a rather slender patrimony for her only son,

Franz realised the fact that he was poor, and the prospect of the future presented itself in very gloomy colours.

What was he to do?

His old music-master, Samuel Klauss, undertook to solve this serious enquiry, and his mute response to it was far more eloquent than any words could have been.

Klauss took his beloved pupil by the hand, and led him to the little room in which they had so often improvised together delightful musical "Fantasias," and silently indicated the little case in which was enclosed the violin like a living thing in a neglected tomb.

That look opened out a new career before Franz Sthoeny. After selling the furniture and chattels of his home, the artist left for Paris in company with his master and friend.

Before Paganini had given his marvellous concerts at the Opera, Franz had become imbued with a secret confidence in his own abilities as a musician—having made mental comparisons in his competitions with other players—and believed that his skill could even surpass that of the most renowned violinists who had been heard in the capital of France.

This belief gradually became a settled conviction, and Franz inwardly resolved that he would break his instrument and terminate his own existence with it rather than fail to rank above the players of the period, and he duly confided this resolution to his master.

Old Klauss was delighted with such noble pride, and honestly believed that he was fulfilling a grand design by flattering it.

But before bringing himself into public notice, Franz waited with feverish impatience for the much lauded Italian to make h's appearance in Paris.

The name of Paganini had been for some months a cruel "thorn in the flesh" to Franz—an incubus, a threatening phantom to the heart of old Samuel. Both had inwardly shivered at that artist's name; both alike had unpleasant misgivings of his coming to Paris.

Words utterly fail to describe the pangs, the heart burnings, the unbounded enthusiasm of that unlucky evening. Franz and Samuel shuddered as Paganini drew the first few notes on his violin—both master and pupil were dumbfounded by the tumultous applause, which was unspeakable anguish of spirit to them; they dared not look at one another; neither exchanged a syllable with the other.

At midnight, after the concert, they returned silently and sadly to their lodgings.

"Samuel!" said Franz with a dispirited air, throwing himself into a chair, "here's a pretty thing. We are good for nothing. Do you understand? Nothing whatever. I say, we are out of it altogether."

The features of the old man became livid. After a brief silence, Samuel answered in a hollow tone:

"Still, you are wrong, Franz; I have taught you all that a master can teach, and you have learnt everything that one man can learn from another. What fault is it of mine, if these d——d Italians have recourse to satanic inspirations, and the infamies of magic, in order to excel in the realm of art?"

Franz glared at his old master with a sinister expression—the look on his face

seemed to say: "What do I care about scruples? Just exalt me to that position in art, and I would only too willingly give myself over to the devil, body and soul."

Samuel guessed what was passing in his pupil's mind, but resumed with simulated calmness: "You know the wretched history of the celebrated Tartini. died one Saturday night, strangled by his familiar spirit who had taught him how to put soul into his violin, incorporating in it the spirit of a virgin. Paganini has done even more. Paganini, in order to breathe into his instrument the groans, the cries of desolation, the most telling notes of the human voice, has become the murderer of the most devoted friend he ever possessed; and he has made the four strings of his matchless violin with the entrails of his victim. There, you have the secret of that subtle fascination, of that irresistible power of sound, which you, my poor Franz, could never equal, except—" And the old man paused abruptly.

His voice seemed to be paralysed with a sort of mysterious dread.

After a brief silence Franz, lowering his eyes, resumed in this strain:

"And you think, Samuel, that I should really obtain those unheard of effects, and create the unbounded outbursts that everywhere greet Paganini, if my instrument were composed of this human catgut?"

"Only too much so!" exclaimed the master with unwonted emotion; "but in order to obtain that consummation it is not merely necessary that the strings should be composed of human fibre; it is also required that the said fibre shall have been part of a sympathetic body. Tartini communicated life to his violin by introducing into it the soul of a virgin—but that girl died out of love for him; whilst the satanic artist—who was present with her during her last agonies—caused the spirit of the dying to pass into his instrument through the medium of a small

cane. As for Paganini, I have already told you

"Oh! the human voice; the miracle of the human voice," pursued Samuel, after a brief silence. "Do you suppose, my poor Franz, that I should not have instructed you in its production, if it could have been obtained by means of art, of that noble and blessed art which I long to see embodied in you yourself, that art which shines by the light of its own genius alone, which despises meanness and holds crime in abhorrence."

Franz could not trust himself to say a

melancholy had taken possession of Franz. The violin, bereft of strings, dusty and neglected, hung in a corner.

Every day Samuel and Franz dined together, and in the evening they used to sit facing each other in the same little salon, but neither dared to enter into conversation with the other; they maintained a strict silence, like two mutes.

Ever since the violin had been ruthlessly destroyed, these two animated beings appeared to have lost the use of speech.

"This has lasted long enough," ex-



"We are out of it altogether."

word. He stood up, and, with an assumed calmness, which revealed the deepest agitation, took the violin in his hand, gave a threatening and scornful look at the strings, then grabbing them with savage frenzy, tore them from the instrument.

Old Samuel uttered a cry, the strings, reduced to shreds, had been flung on to the burning cinders in the grate, and there they were curling and hissing through the heat of the fire like tortured serpents.

Samuel took a candlestick from the table, and, without wishing his pupil good-night, made his way upstairs to bed-

Weeks passed, months passed. A deep

claimed old Samuel at length. And that same evening, before retiring to rest, he came up to his friend to kiss his forehead. Franz, diverted from his sad reflections, mechanically repeated the words of his master.

"This has lasted long enough."

They separated and both went to bed.

On the following morning when Franz opened his eyes to the light of day, he was surprised at not finding his old master in the room at his bedside as usual—the latter generally rose before him.

"My good Samuel! My dearest Samuel!" shouted Franz, jumping out

of bed and hurrying into the master's room.

Franz was startled by the sound of his own voice, but still more so by the silence to his cries.

"There is no silence like the silence of Death." At the bed of Death, and in the stillness of the tomb, silence acquires that mysterious intensity which strikes the heart with awe.

The rigid head of Samuel was lying motionless on the bolster; the salient features of that head were an open forehead brilliant with light and a grey sharp beard that seemed to be raised upwards.

At the sight of the corpse Franz experienced a dreadful quaking, but the nature of the man and the nature of the artist awakened strongly in him at the same time, and in that conflict of passions grief almost dazed him, but the affections of the artist prevailed and subdued the weaker instincts of the man.

A letter addressed to Franz was lying on the dressing-table. The violinist opened it trembling.

It read as follows:—

"MY DEAR FRANZ,-

"When you have read this letter I shall have fulfilled the greatest and last sacrifice that I, your master, and only friend, can accomplish for your renown. He who loves you above everything else in this world is now a dead man; there is now nothing remaining of your old master but impassive organic matter. I will not suggest to you what remains to be done.

"Do not allow yourself to be carried away by vain scruples or foolish superstitions. I have given up my body that you may use it for your everlast-

ing glory.

"You could not sully your fair name by a more heartless ingratitude than by rendering my sacrifice of no effect. When you will have restored the strings to your violin—when those strings composed of my fibre give forth the voice, the groan, the weeping of my ardent love—then—Oh, my dear, Franz, you need fear nothing, take your instrument, track the footsteps of the man who has done us so much harm, present yourself on the field where he has proudly held sway until now, throw down the gauntlet to him. Oh! what an inspiration will stir within you as the thrilling note

of passion will sound from your violin, and you will remember, when fondling the strings, that they were a part of your old master, who now kisses you for the last time, and blesses you.

"SAMUEL."

Two tears dimmed the eyes of Franz, soon however to be dispelled by the fire that lurked within. He stood, stunned and motionless, by the bedside of his dead master.

Let us pass what followed by remarking that the dying wish of the heroic Samuel was carried into effect, as Franz did not in the least hesitate to arrange with the doctors to obtain the fatal strings, with which he hoped to impart soul to his violin.

A fortnight afterwards those strings were stretched upon his instrument. Franz could not bear to look at them. One evening he was desirous of trying the tone of them, but the bow trembled in his nerveless grasp like a knife in the hand of an assassin.

"Never mind," he muttered to himself, replacing the violin into the case, "these foolish fears will vanish when I appear before my powerful rival. The wish of my poor Samuel shall be fulfilled. It will be a great triumph for me and for him if it results in my equalling, or surpassing, Paganini."

But the celebrated violinist was no longer in Paris. At that time Paganini was giving a series of concerts at Ghent Theatre.

One evening, as the great man was seated at a round table, surrounded by a select company of musicians, Franz entered the hall of the hotel, and, stepping lightly towards Paganini, handed him a visiting-card, but without saying a word.

l'aganini read it, darted a keen glance at his unknown visitor, which would have disconcerted anyone less rash, but, seeing that the other was quite unmoved by it he answered dryly, "Signor, your wishes shall be complied with." And Franz, bowing courteously to the assembled guests, took his departure.

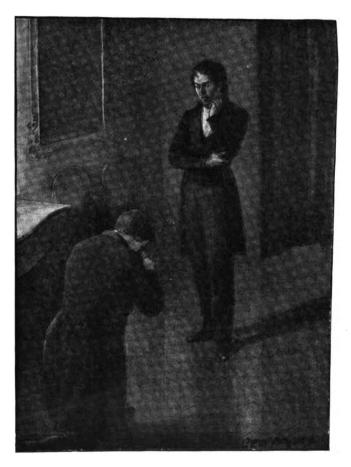
Two days afterwards, in the city of Ghent, a notice was posted up announcing the final concert of Paganini. In the last lines thereof, printed in very large letters, there appeared singular announcement, which provoked ceasing never comments and excited the public curiosity in no small degree.

"On the said evening," ran the notice, "the famous German violinist, Herr Franz Sthoeny, will be present for the first time. He has come to Ghent expressly to challenge the illustrious Paganini, declaring himself prepared to compete with him in the most difficult pieces. The illustrious Paganini

having accepted the challenge, Herr Franz Sthoeny will execute the Fantasia-Capriccio entitled *Le Streghe* (the witches) in comparison with the insuperable violinist."

The effect of this poster was simply electrifying. Paganini, who never lost sight of the main chance even in the midst of his greatest successes, did well on this occasion by doubling the prices of tickets. Needless to say, his calculations proved correct. By common consent the whole city of Ghent seemed to have assembled at the theatre that evening. As the great eventful hour arrived, Franz was found in the actor's room, whither Paganini had just preceded him.

"Bravo, my son," said Paganini, "you



"Pardon! a thousand times pardon!"

have done well by coming early. It would be as well if we inverted the order of the programme. It bothers me having to rush through this business, as you will not be disturbed by my playing my other pieces afterwards. Are you ready?"

"I am quite at your service," replied Franz calmly.

Paganini then gave the word for the curtain to be lifted, and at once presented himself to his audience amid a tempest of applause and frantic shouts.

Never before had the Italian artist exhibited so masterly a power in the execution of that difficult composition *Le Streghe*. The strings of the violin, under the pressure of the long, bony fingers,

twisted like throbbing heart-strings. The sounds seemed to take human form, and dance deliriously with fantastic shapes around that magician of art. In the vacant space of the stage an inexplicable phantasmagoria, formed by the sonorous vibrations, represented the wanton orgies of the witches' meeting.

When Paganini was at last able to withdraw from the scene to which the tumultuous acclamations of his audience were ever recalling him, he met Franz in the rear. The latter had just finished testing his violin, and was about to step forward on to the stage. Paganini was stupened on beholding the complete self-possession of his competitor and the air of confidence which shone in his face. Franz advanced towards the footlights, being welcomed with frigid silence by the audi-Satiated by the fascination of Paganini, the spectators looked upon the new arrival as upon some poor weakling who dares an absurd contest with a rival who is immeasurably his superior.

Nevertheless, after Franz had drawn the first few notes the interest of the audience was visibly awakened.

Franz was a very able executant—one of those executants to whom the word difficulty conveys no meaning. Old Samuel was not mistaken when he said, "I have taught you all that one can teach, and you have learnt all that one can learn."

But that which Franz had dreamed of obtaining by means of those sympathetic strings—the groan of passion, the piercing cry of anguish, the roar of the forest, and the shrieks of the damned—that which old Samuel wanted to communicate to his pupil and friend—all this fabric of illusions and hopes that had been received in simple faith by the German artist fled in a moment.

Under the shock of this dreadful disillusion, Franz lost courage and power. He invoked, in a low voice, the name of the defunct master, entreated him, cursed him in his secret soul, then called him aloud, "Traitor! Scoundrel!" At last, tired of the contest, desperate, and despairing of the issue, he wrenched the fatal strings from the violin and started trampling on them in an access of madness and fury.

"He is mad! He is mad! Stop him! Help him!" shouted a hundred voices from the pit.

Franz hurried from the scene and rushed away from the stage out of sight, to throw himself prostrate at the feet of Paganini.

"Pardon! a thousand times pardon!" groaned Franz, in deep despair. "I believed—I hoped——"

Paganini extended his arms to that poor discomfited man, raised him from the ground, and, embracing him like a brother, said:

"You played divinely. . . . You are a great artist. . . . What you lack is——"

"Oh, I know but too well what I lack," broke in Franz, sobbing; "but old Samuel has deceived me."

And Franz narrated to Paganini the story of the human strings, ingenuously explaining the illusions upon which he had relied.

"Poor Franz!" exclaimed the Italian violinist, with a touch of sarcastic pity. "You have forgotten one circumstance through which the strings of your violin could not compete with mine—in vivacity, in the ardour and impetuosity of passion. Did you not tell me that your old master was a German?"

"Yes," replied Franz, "and so am I."
"Well, then that accounts for it," continued Paganini, slapping poor Franz on the shoulder. "Another time when you wish to infuse into your violin the soul, fire, passion, the life, which I possess, be sure that your strings are composed of Italian fibre."



THE article in THE IDLER for May, describing the deplorable sacrifice of many species of beautiful birds to supply the purposes of fashion, drew especial attention to the case of the unfortunate "Little Egret," from which is obtained the so-called "osprey," now in immense demand for ladies' bonnets. It will be remembered that the writer, Mr. George A. B. Dewar, pointed out in effect that while the wastage of bird-life of all kinds was deplorable enough, the cruelty practised to obtain the plumage of the "Little Egret" was far

more considerable than in the case of other species, inasmuch as the coveted "osprey" is a beautiful nuptial plume that only appears during the breeding season, and to obtain it—plucked as it is, as a rule, out of the living bird by the plumers—involves not only the bleeding to death of the parent birds (supposing that they are not more mercifully killed outright), but also the slow and sure starvation of the unfledged young.

Knowing the keen sympathy for the animal world, whether feathered or furred, felt by Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, we ventured to bring this article before Her Royal Highness's notice with the view to enlist her sympathy on behalf of the "Little Egret," and we are authorised to state that Her Royal Highness disapproves in the strongest possible manner of the heart-rending cruelty described. We are also given to understand that Her Royal Highness is always careful to enquire when purchasing bonnets what are the feathers used upon them, and never knowingly wears any feathers or plumes that it has involved cruelty to obtain.



THE IDLERS' CLUB.

SHOULD WOMEN SMOKE?

BY ROY DEVEREUX, MABEL BEARDSLEY, BARRY PAIN, ARNOLD GOLSWORTHY, ARTHUR LAWRENCE, AND ALBERT KINROSS.

Roy Devereux pleads the fashion.

of contention?

The question which agitates the Idlers' mind this month cuts surely too wide a swath. Permit me before replying to interpolate one little-great, qualifying-disqualifying adjective. "Should Englishwomen smoke?" nearer to this well-worried bone For the world is wide, and in every corner of it women have been smoking since the beginning of time, and nobody ever said them nay till a few timorous Englishwomen began to do in the dark what the women of all other nations had long since done in the day. Then the British matron arose in her wrath, and

cigarette-smoking was placed upon the index next door to patchouli and golden hair. But a few observations taken in the tide of life have brought me to the conclusion that, in this respect at least, the British matron's empire is already of yesterday. Some weeks ago I watched a lady puffing one cigarette after another away in a crowded and fashionable restaurant. She is a lady-in-waiting to a Royal personage. A few days since I saw the comedy repeated. The place was the luncheon-room at Sandown; the smoker was a Countess. Moreover, there are now many women of greater—and of no-importance who make no secret of their passion for the weed which cheersay, and consoles when the hand of fate "spreads wretchedness and bitter, laughing wce." If a woman appears offensive when she smokes, it is the woman who offends, not the cigarette, which does but add a crown to beauty, a nimbus of silver vapour, a garland of blue roses such as the dreamer seeks. From which it may possibly be deduced that I smoke myself.

Mabel Beardsley asks, "Do they want to?"

The form of this question is so tentative, so cautious, so apparently submissive in its subjection to the decision of the Idlers' Club that it affords no certain trumpet-call to battle.

If only it had been "Why should not women smoke?" or "Why should women smoke?" Anything that contained the ring of defiance, the note of prepossession, the suggestion of an established position which

it would give one some pleasure to attack!

Without strong prejudices and unalterable opinions discussion is savourless; there is nothing so dull, so misleading as impartiality, as there is nothing so truly illuminative as settled conviction. I offer this apology then for my contribution to the discussion, that, having no opinions of my own on the subject, and being deprived of the stimulus of perversity, I have turned in despair to the testimony of individuals, with distracting results.

The lady journalist, the Superior of a convent, the mother of a family, and the emancipated daughter of the same family, are alike admirable in their methods of argument, and at complete variance in their views -- yet may one gather something.

Apparently the subject is debatable on the grounds of utility, æstheticism, and

morality.

The question of utility is one of individual application, and requires a knowledge of statistics, medical and otherwise, to which my science and my arithmetic are wholly unequal. On æsthetic grounds it is again difficult to argue without reference to individuals. A beautiful woman of a certain type may enhance her charms in the eyes of some by the graceful arrangement of her smoking medium: the movement

of the hand (so frequent in feminine smoking) with its gestures pointed and defined by the cigarette, the suggestion of languor in the pose, induced by the soothing effect of the curling blue smoke. But it is difficult to discover that any charm is lent by smoking to a woman who is otherwise without attraction. And let even the beautiful, to whom all things are possible, remember that there is little allurement in teeth that have lost their brilliance, and in clothes in which the scent of stale tobacco struggles with chypre for the supremacy.

The question of the morality of smoking need only be raised with regard to the wider issues involved, of the relative responsibilities of men and of women, the treatment of which is impossible in so short a space; and due consideration should be given to the motives and effects of the habit in individuals, and to the differences of race, position, employment, surroundings, and means which modify or aggravate what-

ever there may be of harm in this particular form of self-indulgence.

Presumably, in the question submitted, the accent is laid on women, and no reflection is anticipated on smoking itself. And who will dare to attack a practice recommended to the greater approval of the country by its Chancellor of the Exchequer? Tobacco set far above tea by a fatherly legislation, which would place it within the reach of all; does not that declaration contain a subtle appeal to the sex which holds tea in especial honour and favour? Who will venture to assert that mere financial considerations prompt this invitation of the people to an increased consumption of tobacco, and an ambitious competition with the more highly smoke-

impregnated countries of Europe?

Who then shall hasten to respond to the appeal? Shall only men contribute loyally to the revenues of their country, and ruin their nerves (though, mark you, moderation is also enjoined) in the attempt to balance the accounts of the Exchequer, and supply that deficit of a million and odd pounds? Allowing even for the conversion of male non-smokers, and for the increased activity of present devotees, there must still remain a considerable surplus of unconsumed tobacco. Here I venture to suggest a fresh line of defence for the woman-smoker. No longer need she refer pathetically to the necessity of soothing her over-excited cerebral nerves, and thereby risk the enquiry as to whether her mental output is in proportion to the careful nursing of her brain. No longer need she betray her jealous coveting of what have been aforetime held to be exclusively manly privileges (for prohibition is always more provocative than enforcement).

She may now waft her cigarette triumphantly before her more timid or more scrupulous sisters, confident in the strength of her patriotism, and safeguarded by

the implicit advice of the legislature.

As a matter of fact the question is rather "Do women want to smoke?" Because assuredly if they do (and every year seems to bring an increase of answers in the

affirmative) there is no argument, no authority, that can stay them.

On the other hand, women-smokers are as yet undoubtedly in the minority; by far the greater number of women are withheld by motives of different kinds, the disapproval of male friends (a most potent influence), constitutional disability (how few women really know how to smoke, and how many find even one cigarette hard to finish), and terror of being classed among the emancipated. Let both sides take heart. Time will decide whether the taste of the few, having become the mode of the many, shall become the habit of all. For time alone can justify, and fashion is always right.

Leave it alone! It was a poor thin subject, even when it was young, and now it is tried and worn out and wants to rest. You Barry Pain see, the whole truth of the case is this. A man wants to smoke; is anxious to he does not care one used halfpenny stamp whether people talk please. about it or not. He merely wants to smoke, and he leaves it at

that. But the woman wants to smoke, and, at the same time, to hear somebody

talking about it. Hence, I suppose, this causerie. Well, the thing which more than anything else has wrecked my life is a willingness to oblige. I have got to talk, and I have no opinions on the subject and no anxiety to go through the arduous mental process requisite to the formation of an opinion. So I will just make two definite

statements, and the ladies who read this may pick which they like.

No. 1. Smoking is, at its best, an unpleasant, dirty, selfish, and expensive habit. It gives no pleasure whatever, except to the sot who is temporarily stupefying himself with the fumes of the poisonous weed, and it causes the most intense annoyance and discomfort to other people. Hideous as the habit is in man, it is still more hideous in woman; it is wholly divorced from our ideal of what a pure-minded, rosy-cheeked, healthy English girl should be. The woman who smokes has practically ceased to be a woman.

No. 2. In these days of stress, when in every department woman is constantly competing with men, she begins to feel the same need that a man feels for some healthy and innocuous means of stilling the nerve-storm, resting the brain, quieting the mind. Nothing for this purpose could possibly be better than a cigarette. I may boldly challenge any medical man to produce one single instance of injury done by tobacco used in reasonable moderation. I can produce a hundred instances where it has saved the fatigued brain-worker from the hospital, or even from the asylum. By all means let women smoke, and let this stupid old-world prejudice against the habit die a natural death.

There are the two sets of opinions. If you don't like the second, try the first; if you don't like the first, experiment with the second. I have not yet been able to think about the subject sufficiently to decide which really represents my own views, but as long as man talks about tobacco-smoking woman, tobacco-smoking woman

is content. I have talked. It is enough.

The best answer that I can give to this question is that I am a married man.

Arnold Golsworthy hopes he knows his place better.

Years ago, when I was single and didn't know much, I used to think that women always did what men told them to do, and I could have settled this debate then with one hand tied behind me. But lots of things have happened since that time. Women have

taken to riding bicycles and to wearing the divided responsibilities; and I have learned to keep my place. As the poet says, the old order changeth, and giveth place to the new—woman.

Why should not women smoke? Smoking is declared by competent medical authorities to bring on defective eyesight, to foozle the heart's action, to dim the reasoning powers, and to undermine the moral system beyond recall. Why should

mere men enjoy the monopoly of these delights?

The great difficulty in dealing with a question of this kind is to decide who is competent to give an opinion. A man who has never smoked can hardly claim the right to say whether smoking is a good thing or not. And, on the other hand, a well-seasoned smoker has, by reason of his practice of this baneful habit, fong since ceased to have any claim to be regarded as a reasonable or moral being. The third class of persons likely to interfere in the fray are those who have tried to smoke and failed. But the man who has tried and failed is not a reliable authority on the delights of smoking. Consequently, this is a subject that no one is really competent to discuss.

There are two ways, however, in which the question can be decided without appealing to male people at all. In the first place, tobacco itself may decide it. If a woman can sit out a long evening's smoke and enjoy it, then it would seem that tobacco votes in her favour. If, on the other hand, she finds after smoking that the ground beneath her feet feels as if it were trying to crawl up the wall, that cold perspiration is freely irrigating her heated brow, and that she is tremulously framing a silent prayer that if this be death the end may be soon—then it is clear that tobacco

is ordering her off the grass, and she will be wise if she falls out and toes the line with

the opposition.

In the second place, women may be left to decide the question for themselves. If a woman thinks she should smoke, she will resolve to smoke. And if she makes up her mind to smoke, she will go on smoking against all the opposition that could be crowded into a ten-acre field. Of this I am certain, because I have data of the most reliable kind to go upon. I am a married man.

I don't know at this moment if this subject has appealed to my fellow-Idlers as a serious question. It has an ethical flavour Arthur Lawrence about it—"Should Women Smoke?" I confess that it is a asks, "Why not?" problem of immense difficulty. No reply has suggested itself. I have felt pretty much as I did at school when put in a higher mathematical form than I was entitled to by an oversight in the report of my novitiate exam. to the head-master. In that instance every sum proved too much for me, and all one's concentration of mind on the allotted task resulted in little more than the mere recapitulation of the problems in an unnecessarily neat longhand. It has been so with me in this matter. Kind friends have stopped short in some dissertation to ask me if I felt ill, and I have promptly but irrelevantly replied: "Should Women

I know what our dear grandmothers would have said about it, and I know of one at least who would have shaken her ringlets at me, and who would have convinced me of the utter immorality of the question with a mere look. It is a new idea certainly, but though I feel old-fashioned myself, it would ill accord with the times to regard the idea of women smoking with horror merely because the notion is new. Perhaps I may stay my hand to qualify the word "new" by explaining that as a possible feminine custom in this country it is an innovation of the past twenty years. It comes from abroad, from eastern lands, and intermediately from our fair cousins across the Atlantic. Certainly, I have hardly ever met a woman (under thirty) who has never smoked, either experimentally, casually, or, in comparatively rare cases, habitually.

To light a small cigarette, and, perhaps, blow at it only to find with ingenuous surprise that it has gone out in the process, is an experience that I imagine most girls go through, and the women who have not done this much must be as rare as Chancellors of the Exchequer who never smoke and cannot drink cocoa. The habitual feminine cigarette-smoker is, however, no longer a rarity. Tobacco smoke in any form is a subject which interests me, and, but for seeming to boast of titled acquaintances or patrons, I could give many interesting instances. Moreover, I have interviewed innumerable tobacconists and large firms on the subject—in my purchasing moments—and one day, perhaps, I may issue a text-book on the subject, quoting the precise number of cigarettes smoked per annum by the Baroness de Something and the Duchess of So-and-So.

This is quite by the way, and only concerns those women who do smoke. The question which I have so far evaded seems to me on all fours with such an one as "Should women play the violin?" or "Should men scrub floors?" It depends upon how they do it, and the manner of person who proposes to do it. The Bishop's wife smoking anything would cause a grave scandal, whereas a Cabinet Minister's daughter might join you in a cigarette after luncheon at a private gathering and merely promote camaraderie. I don't pretend to explain the point of this distinction, except on the ground that to be the wife of a Bishop is a serious matter, and that the

political world is, in the main, frivolous.

Then, again, some women do it so charmingly as to convince one that cigarettesmoking is woman's most graceful accomplishment, whilst others——! In any case, I have no fear that the average woman will develop any wild craving for smoking, and still less that she will degenerate into the use of the cigar or a clay pipe, and I imagine that the proportion of habitual smokers amongst women is, after all, but one in a thousand. The woman who has never smoked, or trifled with smoking, is mainly to be found in that large class of young and old women whose lives are devoted to losing much that is good in the vain endeavour to avoid even the appearance of evil. For the rest, I imagine that, but for obvious reasons, my reply to the query "Should Women Smoke?" might have been comprised in the yet briefer question: "Why not?"

By all means! Let them light up at once. The mere question

Albert Kinross evokes visions of a changed world—a better world.

is imaginative!

Consider the elderly female unattached, the peevish, the

patron of lap-dogs, the mainstay and terror of the British boarding-house; consider the effect of such person's introduction to a decent Gold Flake, let us say. Result—her disappearance in a cloud of smoke. And, in her stead, a jovial female sits, with pipe merrily bubbling, beside a tumbler suspiciously bright. I picture to myself dozens of such old ladies. They are telling one another stories—such stories! They are actually laughing! The curate and the weather—inex-haustible topics—have disappeared from their conversations; now they discuss the colouring of clays, their preferences in cigarettes, and the merits of the last crop of Murias. Could anything be more delightful? Men seek their companionship and fill their pipes from the same jar. "A little music" and the crusted songs we know so well disappear from the drawing-room; all is animation, the unrestrained fraternisation of man and woman united by equal opportunity. The policy of the "open

The intelligent can carry this pleasing scene further. A paragraph or two will not hold it. But, surely, a measure whose least result will be the extinction of the lap-dog and the acidulated female should meet with universal approbation. Therefore, let woman smoke, encourage her, be kind to her in the first dread moments of courageous attempt, forbear to notice her pallor; and afterwards, when she emerges seasoned into the light of day, present her with tobacco instead of gloves, cigarette-

papers instead of stationery.

door" has justified its domestic existence.

As for the "girl"—I have said nothing about the "girl." She usually does as she pleases, bless her!



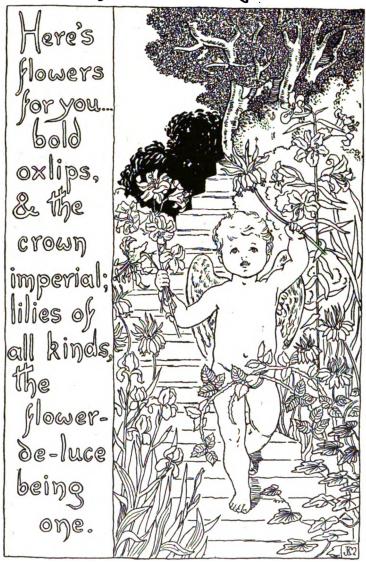


OUR VILLAGE.
(Drawn by F. & H. Miller.)

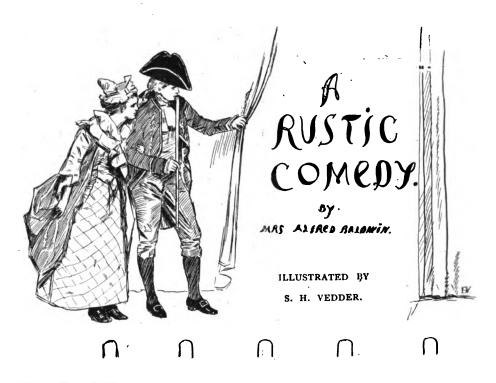
"Here, here I live with what my board
Can with the smallest cost afford."

-Herrick.

THE JDLER.



JULY





HE Marchvilles of Marchville Chase were the oldest, most distinguished family in the county, and the proudest, for the head of the house

had twice declined a Peerage, arguing that there were dukes not a few, and lords many, but only one Marchville of Marchville Chase. But though the Marchvilles were indifferent to a title, they would not descend a step in the social scale. There was not even the tradition of a mėsalliance in the family history; which happy state of things might have continued if, a century ago, Lady Elizabeth, wife of Mr. Marchville, and mother of his two sons, had not taken it into her head to import into her dairy the art and mystery of making Devonshire cream.

Devonshire cream cannot be prepared without the help of a Devonshire dairymaid, and Lady Elizabeth procured one who was an adept in the art, and all that is necessary is intelligence and a pair of clever industrious hands, anything beyond were superfluous. And the superfluity in the shape of laughing brown eyes, golden hair, and complexion of milk and roses possessed by the dairymaid was fraught with mischief.

While Lady Elizabeth rode the Devonshire cream hobby at the hardest, her eldest son Lionel was making the grand tour, and her second and favourite son Christopher was living at home, snubbed by his father and indulged by his mother. Christopher had a fine talent for doing nothing very thoroughly, combined with an exceptional power of resisting all efforts to instruct or improve him. He had passed through Eton and Cambridge unscathed, so far as the attainment of knowledge was concerned; but he could ride anything in the shape of a horse, was a consummately skilful trout-fisher, and drank fairly heavily for his age.

To make a long story short, Christopher Marchville, weary of doing nothing, took up the light work of love in idleness, courted the bewitching dairymaid under pretence of praiseworthy zeal for the making of Devonshire cream, ran away with her, and married her out of hand.

He had not counted the cost of his hasty act before committing the unpar-He was cut off with a donable sin. shilling, he and his dairymaid wife were forbidden the house, and Lady Elizabeth could never afterwards endure the sight, taste, or mention of Devonshire cream. Two years later the disinherited Christopher, when somewhat the worse for drink, broke his neck in a steeplechase. His pretty rustic widow with her boy returned to Devonshire, and presently married, for her second husband, a small market-gardener. In course of time Christopher Marchville's grandson, also a Christopher, left the West country for the Midlands, and worked on a farm some twenty miles from the estate on which his ancestors had lived for centuries.

Hard living, scant education, and marriage with poor uncultivated folk, in three generations reduced the descendant of an ancient and distinguished family almost to the level of an agricultural labourer. Christopher Marchville was aware that he had some of the best blood in England in his veins, and felt a sort of dim pride in the fact. He knew nothing of the family to which he belonged, except that his grandfather had been disowned for marrying a pretty dairymaid, and as he himself was in a rank of life where such a marriage was desirable, he settled it in his mind that the Marchvilles were proud devils, and thought little about them. The present Mr. Marchville, to whom Christopher was related by an attenuated cousinship, was an elderly widower, an invalid, with a son an officer in the army, and two daughters. spent the greater part of the year in the south of Europe, and was seldom at Marchville Chase.

One summer Sunday evening Christopher Marchville and his wife were sitting under the hawthorn tree in front of their cottage. Christopher, or Kit Marchville as he was called, rented a small farm on which he worked harder than the poorest labourer. Mrs. Marchville was a little wiry woman, with bright dark eyes, sharp features, and a mouth that closed like a trap. Her hard-worked hands rested on her white apron, with an occasional rapid movement as if she were brushing imaginary dust from her lap. Her husband was enjoying his unwonted leisure leaning back in his chair, his legs stretched out before him, his hat tilted forward on his thick grey hair, as he smoked his pipe and took a draught of cider from the mug beside him on the bench. Kit was a fine looking man of fifty, tall and well-built, with large shapely hands, weather-beaten complexion, and clear-cut features. If he had known how to carry himself he would have been an imposing figure, but his height only made him clumsier than if he had been a smaller man, and he was embarrassed with his long arms and legs.

They had sat silent for some time, when Kit broke forth suddenly,

"I say, Sally, to morrow's Bank 'Oli-' day!"

"And if it is, what's that to do with us?"

"Why shouldn't you and me take a 'oliday, it's long enough since we had one?" and Kit looked at his wife awaiting her reply.

Mrs. Marchville evidently did not rise to the festive idea of a day's pleasuring. She pursed up her thin lips before she made answer.

"I don't 'old with going out for a 'oliday myself, that in general ends in blistered 'eels, a bad 'eadache and a sharp temper next day. If you think to give your 'ands a 'oliday, you only take it out o' your feet, and walk yourself off your

legs for a change. Let them go wandering as likes, I'd rather stop at 'ome and do a bit o' sewing as I never get time to do. That 'ud be 'oliday enough for me!"

"Well, old woman, I feel like taking a 'oliday to-morrow. We've never 'ad but two in five-and-twenty 'ear, and we can afford a day off now better than we could then. Hang it all! 'aven't we got more than two 'underd pound in the Bank, and neither chick nor child to scrat for? I don't deny that if the little b'y and gel had lived, I should ha' been as much against throwing money away as you are, missu;, but since the Lord'as took a fancy to 'em both, and we've no one to lay by for now, I'm agoing to 'ave a day's pleasuring, whether you come along or not!"

"Where was you thinking o' going?" asked Sally, her curiosity roused by her husband's determination.

"Why, to 'ave a look at Marchville Chase, to be sure! Here 'ave I lived all these 'ears, and never so much as seen the 'ouse my grandfather was kicked out of for marrying my grandmother. The park's open on Bank 'Oliday, and thronged wi' folks, and you and me'll go along with 'em. It's twenty mile by rail and a walk at the end, and it'll be summat to think of arterwards, as we've seen the place my father's family lived in for 'underds of 'ears."

"When you put it i' that way, Kit, there's reason in it, and I don't mind if I do go along with you just to 'ave a look at the old place. But it won't set you wishing as your grandfather hadn't took and married beneath 'im, and as we was living now at The Chase, will it?" Sally asked anxiously.

"Lor' bless you, woman, my grandfather's doings is no more to me than any other chap's grandfather's! I married to please myself, and I suppose he did, too. But I want to see the place where we lived when we was gentlefolks,"

Accordingly Kit and his wife spent Bank Holiday in satisfying their natural though tardy curiosity, and they wandered about the park, gardens, and terraces of The Chase till they were as footsore as Mrs. Marchville had predicted. Kit's burly form towered head and shoulders above the crowd of trippers as he was seen trying to enter the house, and he took the rebuffs he met with in consequence in high good-humour. "It's queer, Sally, ain't it, not to be let go into the 'ouse where my grandfather was born and lived till 'is own father turned 'im out for good!"

"Ay, it is, and when I look round this lovely place full o' trees and flowers, it puts me in mind of Adam and Eve being turned out o' the garden, for when your grandfather was turned out o' this neither 'im nor his children never got back no more!"

When Kit and his wife reached home at midnight, more tired with unwonted travelling and sight-seeing than if they had done a stiff day's work, the girl who helped in the house and dairy met them with astounding news. Mr. Purcell, the lawyer from the county town, had called to see her master; and quoth the little maid, "He did seem put about when he 'eard as you wasn't in. He said it was summat as he must see you about hisself, and he'll be here by nine o'clock in the morning."

Kit was puzzled, and scratched the back of his head.

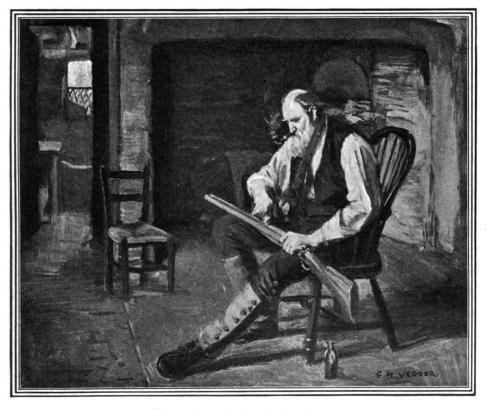
"It can't be as he's come to raise the rent for the landlord, just as things is beginning to come round a bit," suggested Sally.

"Why, no; the lease 'as got three 'ears to run yet afore it can be touched, it's not that."

"And we don't owe nothing, thank goodness, so it can't be to get no money out of us, though that's what them blood-sucking lawyers is after mostly," said Mrs. Marchville with decision. "Praps he's come about that bit o' hungry land on the 'illside Farmer Grist

is always werriting you to rent, and no wonder he wants it took off 'is 'ands, swallering muck enough to force a crop of mushrooms on a turnpike road, and nothing coming of it after all, if it isn't bills for labour and cartage."

Mr. Purcell was full of engagements that morning and had only time to tell Kit the astounding news, that owing to the sudden death of his client, Mr. Marchville of Marchville Chase, and the death of his son, killed in Africa, he had



Kit was in the kitchen cleaning his gun.

"But what brings him on Bank 'Oliday, whatever it's about?" objected Kit, "when a lawyer might ha' known as Bank 'Oliday isn't a day at all. It's no better than a Sunday, you can't do nothing lawful and reg'lar on it."

In the morning, a couple of hours before breakfast on the land and in the dairy had given the worthy pair much else to think of, and they awaited the lawyer's visit without undue excitement. Kit was in the kitchen cleaning his gun, and Sally scalding milk-pans in the dairy, when Mr. Purcell arrived.

inherited the fortune and estate of the Marchvilles. With extremity of astonishment Kit's face grew blank as a barn door.

"It really is the case, my dear sir," (the last time Mr. Purcell spoke to Kit he had called him "my good fellow"), "and I shall have the honour of calling on you to-morrow to go into the matter with you more fully, when you have had a little time to accustom your mind somewhat to the unexpected change in your circumstances. Allow me to congratulate you," and the lawyer seized Kit's big limp hand

and grasped it fervently as a tribute of respect to wealth in the abstract.

"Gad, but it's rum, it's very rum! What will my missus say!" and no sooner had Kit closed the door after Mr. Purcell than he shouted, "Sally!" but hearing no shrill reply he hastened to the dairy with red excited face.

"Sally, are you deaf that you didn't 'ear me 'oller? Lawyer Purcell's just been, and who do you think he says we are? Why, you and me's Mr. and Mrs. Marchville! There's a pretty thing!"

Sally looked up for an instant with a scornful pity while she wiped out a steaming can with a cloth.

"If that's all he's got to tell you, he might ha'stayed away as far as I can see. I don't know what you may call yourself, but I've been Mrs. Marchville five-and-twenty 'ears according to my reckoning, and I'd ought to know."

"Ay, but Sally, we're Mr. and Mrs. Marchville o' Marchville Chase, I tell you."

"This ain't the first of April, Kit," replied the unbelieving Sally. "Bank 'Oliday at The Chase has turned your 'ead. Work suits you better nor play," and her mouth closed like a trap.

"Hang it all! but lawyer Purcell's brought me papers as shows it's true! Old Mr. Marchville's dead in furren parts, and 'is son's killed in Africa, and I'm the heir-at-law. Gad! but I am, you needn't stare at me so! You and me is Mr. and Mrs. Marchville o' The Chase, I tell you, wi' thousands and thousands a year; and we've got to go and live up at the house, what's more? Do you believe me now?"

"Lord ha' mercy on us! What will folks think of us!" and the little woman leaned against the wall for support, while her big husband stood erect in the doorway inflated with new and agreeable feelings of pride.

"Why, they'll think a great deal more o' Mr. and Mrs. Marchville o' The Chase

than what they do o' you and me on a thirty-acre farm," said Kit with a slow smile. "I tell 'ee what, old woman, if I wasn't wed a'ready, I'd see if one o' Lord Trebovir's daughters wouldn't 'ave me!"

"For shame o' your face, Kit, to stand there and talk i' that way to a decent woman, leave alone being your own wife! If that's how you're going to speak because you've come into a fortune unexpected, I wish the lawyers had fought over it till there wasn't a penorth o' pickings left for nobody! You're forgetting a'ready as I'm your lawful wife!"

"Nay, you don't give a chap a chance to forget it, Sally! I was only talkin' o' what I should ha' done if this'ere had 'appened when I was onmarried, and could 'ave enj'yed myself like. But summat or other I must do to keep this day! I'll go round to the "Red Dragon" and stand treat to everyone, like Mr. Marchville o' The Chase as I am!"

"No, Christopher," said the little woman with a spark in her eye. "If you're Mr. Marchville, remember as I'm Mrs. Marchville and don't allow no such goings on. You go back to the six acre and see to cutting the barley, and I'll go on with my work. This news 'll keep, and that's more than grain and milk 'll do. So go along with you, and we'll talk it over when we set down to our dinner."

Every day brought fresh proof to Kit and his wife of the reality of their changed The late Mr. Marchville's circumstances. agent came to report the state of affairs to the new owner of the property, and to ask him when he would like to take up his abode at The Chase, where everything was in order, and a staff of servants waiting to receive their new master and mistress. Moreover, Kit had an account with the family bankers, and could draw cheques to practically any amount he chose, though a deep suspicion of danger involved in signing his name to any manner of document caused him to use his new powers with the utmost caution.

The thought of the big house full of servants in the dark blue livery of the Marchvilles struck Kit and his wife with dismay. As they sat by the fire at night, he smoking and she knitting, he said, "Sally, I'm a'most sorry we've got to go and live up at The Chase. I'd rather stay ere, knowing as I could afford not to worry when things went wrong, not if the wire-worm and flies and caterpillars eat up the crops wholesale. I could set and study my bank-book of a night, and tot up the figures, and make a new will every week for empl'yment like."

"Ay, but we've got to go through with this 'ere, Kit, and I'm not sorry the day's fixed when we're agoing to The Chase. There's nothing to wait for after our things is come from the tailor's and dressmaker's, and it's kind o' Mr. Purcell to give you a few 'ints to keep us from looking silly before strangers," said Mrs. Marchville, knitting rapidly.

"Give me 'ints, indeed! He darn't tell me a thing I don't ask him about direct. He don't forget as I'm Mr. Murchville o' The Chase, nor I don't let him forget it neither!"

The dreaded day arrived when Mr. and Mrs. Marchville, supremely uncomfortable in their new clothes, bade good-bye to their simple home and familiar occupations, to begin a strange life in all the pomp of Marchville Chase. Kit was dressed in shining black, carrying in his hand a pair of new gloves that no power could coax over his big red fingers, and with the buttons screwed up in paper like small oranges. He was nervous and ill at ease, and looked frequently at his new gold watch, and put it back in his pocket without having read the time. His wife sat opposite to him in the railway carriage in all the pomp of new mourning, wiping her black silk skirt with her handkerchief, in futile contest with the dust that blew in through the open window, with hands that still trembled from the exertion of fighting their way into a pair of number eight kid gloves.

"There'll be our own carriage awaiting to meet you at the journey's end, what do you think o' that?" said Kit, as they drew up at the station. A couple of footmen, in long blue coats with crape on their sleeves, were standing on the platform. They glanced at Mr. and Mrs. Marchville, and deciding they were not the people they had come to meet, continued their search the length of the train. whisper from the guard brought them back, and one conducted his new master and mistress to the barouche that stood waiting, while the other superintended the brief business of getting the luggage out of the van.

"This can't be all," said the servant in amazement, as the porter slung an old cowhide trunk and a carpet bag on the top of the omnibus from The Chase, "this can't be all!"

"It is, though, and but for the look o' the thing they might ha' taken it with 'em in the carriage!"

As the big barouche bowled up the avenue of limes Mr. and Mrs. Marchville remembered vividly their recent visit to The Chase. Kit looked out on the shaven lawns and flower-beds till the spirit of newly-acquired proprietorship wrought in him, and he said, "This 'ere place shan't be open to the public next Bank 'Oliday, I can tell you! I don't want no folks prying about my place, treading on my turf, breaking the boughs off my trees, and leaving their empty bottles and sandwich papers littered over my grass!"

It was a radiant September afternoon, and the stately Elizabethan house, terraced gardens, and yew hedges were seen at their best, when the new owners drove up to the entrance. As soon as the carriage stopped, before a servant could open the door, Kit jumped out, followed by Sally, alighting backwards as she used to do from a market cart, and stretching out a neat stockinged leg behind her as a feeler for the ground.

"It don't look quite right somehow,"

muttered Kit, as he watched the performance dubiously, though he could not have pointed out where the fault lay, and when his lady turned round and faced the house, he walked up the wide steps before her to the porch. A group of servants in livery stood waiting to receive them, and in the hall the housekeeper, a stout, redfaced woman in black silk, advanced curtsying, and behind her more servants like supernumeraries on the stage. Beads of perspiration stood on Kit's brow, and he sincerely lamented the death of the late Mr. Marchville. He whispered uneasily to his wife, "I'd no idea when we come into the property we should 'ave to take to the live-stock as well!" when a grey-haired servant in black, looking like a clerical dignity, came to the rescue. "You would like to be shown to your dressing-room, sir, after your journey," and Kit, horribly uncomfortable and bewildered, was led upstairs by Mr. Gitting, the butler, while Mrs. Fangs, the housekeeper, took possession of the astonished Sally.

The new owner of Marchville Chase was shown into a dressing-room containing a marble bath and many luxuries of the toilet of which he knew neither the use nor the name. When he was left alone he was glad to hear his wife's shrill voice in the next room, for, though it was raised in no amiable tone, it made him feel at home as nothing else could have done. Kit amused himself turning on hot and cold water into the bath, and looking about him till all was silent, when he opened the door, and peeped into the great bedroom where Sally was standing flushed with honest wrath.

"Did you ever 'ear such a thing!" she exclaimed excitedly. "If that lady in black as calls herself the housekeeper didn't bring a young person into the bedroom, and tell me as she was the French maid to wait on me! And if she didn't take and whisk the mantle off my shoulders, and untie my bonnet strings afore I justly

knew what she was after! "Ands off," I said, Do you think I'm a infant, or lost the use o' my limbs and can't do nothing for myself! What 'ud you think o' me, I should like to know, if I took and pulled the things off your back, without as much as by your leave! She may be French, but she understood good English fast enough when I spoke like that, for the hussy fair ran out of the room," and the indignant Sally locked the door to prevent the possibility of the maid's return.

"I think you'd best not begin by offending folks," said Kit cautiously, when a knock was heard at the door, and a voice announced that tea was ready in the yellow drawing-room, whereupon Sally dipped her warm face into cold water, and dried it with her pocket-handkerchief, for she could not be so extravagant as to use one of the fine damask towels. Then giving her hair a pull on each side of her face, and flattening it with the palms of her hands on the head, she went downstairs with a glazed and irate countenance.

Mr. and Mrs. Marchville were met at the foot of the stairs by Mrs. Fangs and Mr. Gitting, who did the honours of the house to their new master and mistress on their arrival. They conducted them in state to the yellow drawing-room, which Kit entered on his toes whispering as though he were in church. Sally looked about her with her keen black eyes at the Persian rugs, amber satin curtains pictures and mirrors on the walls, the cabinets of rare old china, at the grand piano and the harp standing by it, gazing so intently that it did not occur to her to sit down.

"Will madam be seated," said the housekeeper, offering Mrs. Marchville a gilded chair, on the extreme edge of which she timidly perched. But Kit stood in one of the windows with his hands behind his back, looking out into the park. He dared not speak in the presence of the great Mr. Gitting, who he fancied looked



"At what hour will you dine to-night, sir?"

condescendingly at him. He was longing for a mug of cider after the dusty journey, if only he dared to ask for it.

Sally, too, was oppressed by Mrs. Fangs, and sat in silence with her hand-kerchief spread in her lap for a crumb-cloth. She wished to propitiate the potentate in black silk, and when she thought her stern glance somewhat relaxed, she mustered up courage to offer her a cup of tea. But Mrs. Fangs replied with a dignity:

"Thank you, madam, I know my place, which is not the drawing-room but the 'ousekeeper's room, where me and Mr. Gitting have 'ad our teas already," and Mrs. Marchville quailed before her.

Kit took a cup of tea, because he did not know the correct formula to employ in refusing anything offered to him by the great Mr. Gitting. But he thought it poor stuff, and scalded his tongue.

"At what ti ne will you dine to-night, sir?" asked Mr. Gitting, as he stood, silver tray in hand.

"Dine? Why, me and the missus had our dinners at one o'clock sharp afore we set out! You mean supper?"

Mr. Gitting cleared his throat, and replied with respectful emphasis, "No, sir, I do not mean supper. The usual hour for dinner at The Chase is eight o'clock, sir."

"Then do the same as the Marchvilles 'ave always done, their ways 'll be good enough for me, I dare say; I'm one of 'em, you know," and Kit turned very red in the face.

"Perhaps you would prefer leaving the menu to me this evening, madam," said Mrs. Fangs to her mistress who sat crumbling her cake, and occasionally blowing her tea to cool it, being warned of its temperature by her husband's fate. Menu was a word in an unknown tongue to Mrs. Marchville, and when the question was repeated she replied, uncertain whether she might not be surrendering their newly-acquired rights at The Chase

by consenting, "Yes, I don't mind leaving it, if it's any use to you."

Mrs. Fangs and Mr. Gitting exchanged a rapid glance. But as nothing further was asked, Sally hoped her good-humour had propitiated the powers and that all was well.

After tea the new master and mistress were solemnly conducted over the house by Mrs. Fangs, through stately rooms and pictured galleries and ghostly bedrooms, each dominated by a vast four-post bed, looking as cheerful as a hearse, till Kit and Sally were crushed and depressed by so much unhome-like splendour.

When they had made the entire round of the house Mrs. Fangs threw open the door of a snug sitting-room on the groundfloor, with red window curtains, a comfortable squab sofa, and a large chintzcovered chair by the fire. On the hearth sat a cat busied in a work of supererogation, washing its white shirt-front that was already spotlessly clean. There was a pleasant odour of tea and muffins, and a caged bird was twittering in the sunny window. Kit rubbed his hands at the homely comfort of the room, where he could whistle and laugh, instead of whispering as if he were in church, and his wife decided this was the only place in the grand house where she could feel like herself. She was summoning up courage to say she would like it for her own, when Mrs. Fangs spoke in deprecating tones, "This is my room, madam, not much of a place, and there's many a gentleman's 'ouse not to compare with The Chase that 'as a better 'ousekeeper's room than what I've got. But I try to be comfortable in it, madam," and she sighed.

Kit and Sally would joyfully have exchanged the yellow drawing-room for Mrs. Fangs' room, but they could only look with longing on the little paradise from which by their very dignity they were excluded.

"That woman's kept the best room in the 'ouse for herself!" said Sally when they were alone, and swelling with a sense of injury.

"Ay! and what's worse, I don't know how to turn her out of it neither. She's been 'ere till she's regular took root, I expect."

"I wonder when we shall get to feel at home in this grand place, Kit. It's too big for me; there's too many folks in it eating their 'eads off, and doing nothing. I never felt so queer in my life!"

"You'll feel better just now, missus, when you've had something to eat. We shall like the place well enough, if we like our vittles, and whatever they give us I'm going to eat hearty, for I'm downright hungry wi' sight-seeing in my own 'ouse," when the door opened and the French maid entered to ask madam what dress she would please to wear that evening.

Mrs. Marchville's British spirit revolted at the thought of quailing before a Frenchwoman, and she replied with a kindling eye, "To 'ear you talk, anyone 'ud think I 'adn't got a dress to my back, instead of setting 'ere in a silk gownd fit for the Oueen's table!"

"But madam wears her costume de voyage, her robe is dusty," objected the maid in her pretty English.

"What else do you expect it to be when I came by train? Wait till I ask your opinion before you tell me what you think of my clothes, Miss Imperence!" and Delphine, flushing with passion, threw manners to the winds and burst forth in a torrent of vituperation in her own tongue, and as she ran from the room her mistress cried shrilly after her, "Don't think to frighten me with your French language, madam!"

At dinner Mr. and Mrs. Marchville were seated in state at either end of a long table, hidden from each other by a towering silver *épergne*, and plants enough to fill a small conservatory. Behind each chair stood a tall footman in velvet kneebreeches and silk stockings, whose duty it apparently was to snatch away the plate

from before his master and mistress just as they had ventured on the strange preparation offered to them. This ill-timed alacrity so annoyed Kit that he grasped his plate with both hands, and glared defiantly at the servant who was about to remove it, and he let it go as if it had been red hot.

The wine was Mr. Gitting's care, and as Mr. and Mrs. Marchville did not know how to refuse anything he condescended to offer them, their full glasses stood untasted while they were longing, but not daring, to ask for their accustomed cider. If Sally could have caught her husband's eye she might have mustered up courage, but they were invisible to each other, practically alone in the world, separated by a silver mountain and groves of ferns and miniature palms. They were afraid of the echo of their own voices in the lofty room, and the oppression of silence was added to that of isolation. Sally scarcely ate anything, as dishes of unknown name and nature were offered to her that she had neither courage nor inclination to taste. She dined chiefly on bread, which was whisked away and replaced by a fresh piece whenever she moved her hand from it, a wilful waste that made her fear lest woeful want should soon be knocking a the door.

But with the champagne things began to improve. Mrs. Marchville felt less afraid of Mr. Gitting, and Kit shouted to her from behind the plants at the far end of the table, "'Ere's summat better than cider, old woman! Mr. Gitting, ain't these glasses rayther small? Fill up the tumblers, and tell us what they call this 'ere tap?"

"Heidsieck's Dry Monopole, sir," replied Mr. Gitting with severity.

"Oh, indeed! Then me and it'll get to know one another better! You can bring another bottle. And here, young man!" addressing the footman behind his chair, "do something for your living, can't you! Transplant some o'them trees," pointing to the ferns on the table that obscured his view. "Just make a clearing through that coppice, will you, that me and my missis can get a sight of each other!" And Kit nodded to his wife, and saying, "'Ere's to your good health, old lady!" drained his glass, and began to feel that he was master in his own house.

A month passed by in luxurious idleness and Mr. and Mrs. Marchville were sick of their monotonous days, deprived of their accustomed occupation and not even allowed to wait upon themselves, by the troup of servants that anticipated their every want. They soon quarrelled with their valet and maid and sent them away, flatly refusing to have them replaced. Delphine's dismissal came about from an apparently simple cause. As a matter of course a bath was prepared for Mrs. Marchville in the morning, and her maid could not have foreseen that this ordinary circumstance would be taken as an extraordinary insult.

"Do I look as if I wanted soap and water?" asked the outraged lady. "Talk o' French politeness! Why, there isn't an Englishwoman 'ud dare tell me to my face as I wanted washing! It's beyond everything if I'm to be treated like a' infant in my own 'ouse! You'll be for putting a bib on me next, if I didn't send you away to some one as likes such ways better than what I do!" and Delphine was dismissed on the spot.

Mrs. Marchville wished she dared have sent the housekeeper away too, and her husband longed to be freed from the bondage of Mr. Gitting's presence. In their simplicity they could not realise that the supercilious velvet-footed Mr. Gitting and the female potentate in black silk were their servants who could be dismissed at their pleasure. This easy way of getting rid of the real master and mistress of the house did not occur to them, and they sat up late talking in whispers of what they would do, if only that overpowering man and woman were gone.

"If we could get shut o' them two, and send them idle fellows packing in their velvet breeches, we'd spend our evenings comfortable in the 'ousekeeper's room, and you'd 'ave your pipe and bit o' hot supper, and it 'ud be like old times. There's no snugness in rooms hung round wi' pictures o' men and horses that big they make me feel as if I was out on the road and they'd run over me. And Mr. Gitting looks that scornful!"

"Ay, Sally, summat must be done. I can't stand it much longer, having that fellow standing at my elbow like a mute at a funeral. I don't eat 'alf what I should if he wasn't looking on all the time, counting every bit as goes into my mouth," and Kit looked quite haggard.

"And Mrs. Fangs is that haughty," chimed in Sally, "I darn't ask to 'ave a thing different in my own 'ouse! If this is being great folks, I wish as we was back at the little farm!"

Kit's face grew suddenly radiant, and he said joyfully, "I say, Sally, how would it be if we was to buy 'em both off?"

"But would they be willin', do you think? They've 'ad an uncommon good berth 'ere," said his wife doubtfully.

"Ay, but don't you see, we'd make it worth their while to go. I'll write 'em each a cheque for five 'underd pounds, if they'll please to take it and go."

"And don't you stick at five 'underd if they object!" said Sally eagerly.

"I don't 'ardly think as they will object, somehow. Let me see, we've been 'ere five weeks. A 'underd a week's good pay even for swells like them," said Kit with his slow smile.

The following morning with fear and trembling, Mr. and Mrs. Marchville summoned the two great functionaries into their unimposing presence. With much diffidence, many apologies, and more stories than they had told in their honest lives before, they settled matters amicably with Mrs. Fangs and Mr. Gitting.

"You see," said Kit, holding the cheques

in his moist and shaking hand, "me and Mrs. Marchville would be much obliged if you'd both just kindly go. Not as we're dissatisfied nothing o' the kind, but you want more of a sphere like for your talents, and me and the missus don't require such a waste o' power as you looking after us, and we should take it kindly if you'd accept a matter o' five 'underd pound apiece, and just go, no offence being intended," and Kit presented the cheques with as much fear as though they were bad shillings he was trying to palm off.

Not a muscle moved, not a ray of expression passed over Mr. Gitting's well-trained face as he gravely accepted the cheque, though his heart beat for joy and he already saw himself landlord of the public-house he had long had in view. He coughed into the hollow of his hand before he spoke.

"This is a 'ighly unusual horfer, sir, and as one that 'as always bin in good service, sir, it's not the first time as I've gone agin my conscience to oblige a gentleman." And he impressed his master and mistress with the idea that he was conferring a favour upon them in accepting their bounty. Mrs. Fangs endeavoured to shed an appropriate tear, but it could not be done. She laughed for joy in her hand-kerchief, and backed out of the room with a series of curtsies as though she were leaving the presence of royalty.

Sally, feeling at length mistress in her own house, dismissed every servant on the premises. She sent for the little girl that had been her "help" at the farm, and she and Kit moved themselves and their effects into the housekeeper's coveted room, and prepared to spend their first merry evening at The Chase. No more stately dinners for them. They supped on pork chops, and Sally broiled them herself. She was happier than she had been since their reverse of fortune, as she stood gridiron in hand at the fire, with a big apron over her smart silk dress, pricking and turning the chops with a fork. When all was ready

she set the dish on the table, and said cheerfully, "It's a blessing to see your vittles again so as you can know what you're eating. What wi' sauces and gravies, the meat we've had here's been disguised in liquor, till I couldn't ha' told what I'd got on my plate, not if you'd put me on my Bible oath!"

Six months passed by, and Kit and his wife discovered that even the possession of Mrs. Fangs' room could not make them happy at The Chase. They were pining after the farm with its cheerful toil and homely cares and interests. When they left their small room to cross the great hall with its double flight of marble stairs, the size and silence of the house oppressed them like a nightmare. Sally took to lying awake at nights thinking she heard fcotsteps in the corridors, and doors open and shut that were locked and bolted. their greatest trial was that everyone in the county called upon them, and the receiving of visitors was so dreadful that in sheer desperation Kit resolved to attack the evil at its source. He took the knockers off the front door, and the handle from the bellwire, and turned the house into an impregnable fortress, from which ladies drove away discomfited after witnessing John Thomas's abortive efforts to announce their arrival.

As the Marchvilles were too far from their friends to see them, and incapable of making new ones, a terrible loneliness was added to the luxurious sufferings of the industrious farmer and his wife. They had not a neighbour to speak to. In his enforced idleness Kit was visiting his wine cellar too frequently, and Sally wished twenty times a day they were back at the little farm.

It was a bright spring morning when Mr. and Mrs. Marchville opened the front door that had been closed all the winter, and prepared to clean the great marblepaved hall. Kit was in his shirt-sleeves and green baize apron, and Sally, with dress pinned up and a clean duster over her head, was scattering moisttea leaves about, when they were surprised by morning callers. Two gentlemen came up the great flight of steps and entered the open door. One of them was their old friend Mr. Purcell, and the gentleman with him, a tall, sallow man with a grey moustache, who looked with unmitigated astomshment on the master and mistress of Marchville Chase.

Mr. Purcell was the first to speak. "Good-morning to you," he said, with a familiar nod that Kit and his wife would have resented a few months ago. "I think I surprised you both pretty considerably last summer, and now I've come to prepare you for a second surprise that I'm afraid you won't find so agreeable."

"For goodness gracious! don't say as somebody else is dead, and left us another fortune and barracks to live in!" cried Sally, shaking out the last tea leaves from the pot on the dusty marble.

"No, nobody's dead this time, Mrs. Marchville. It's more like somebody coming to life again, for I've brought Colonel Marchville to see you, that we all believed was killed in Africa. Here he is safe and sound. He'd been wounded and was very ill, so folks of course said he was dead, and he, and not your good husband, is the rightful owner of the estate and house," said Mr. Purcell. And the tall, sallow gentleman stepped forward and bowed to Sally.

Kit laughed aloud. "Well, Colonel, I don't deny but what I was glad when we heard you were killed; but though I didn't know you when you was alive, I've learned to mourn for you true and hearty, and to think your death as brought us to this place was a bad job. I'm downright j'yful to see you alive. Now me and my missus can get out o' this place that we don't suit, and that don't suit us. And I 'ope you'll 'ave a son and heir as soon as

convenient, for if you was really to die this time, and we had the whole blessed property on our hands again, it 'ud be too much for us, Colonel, it 'ud be too much," and Kit wiped his moist brow.

The real Mr. Marchville of Marchville Chase laughed heartily.

"You're a fine fellow, Cousin Christopher, and I'm sorry you haven't enjoyed your short possession of the place more. I'm afraid my long illness, during which I'd no communication with home and didn't know what was going on, has inconvenienced you and Mrs. Marchville a good deal."

"Ay, we never was so put about," said Sally, replying for Kit. "What wi' leaving the farm and dairy, and coming to this big 'ouse full o' lazy imperences in plush breeches that we sent packing afore we'd been 'ere a month! We'd used to work fourteen hours a day at the farm cheerful, but my word, doing nothing's the 'ardest work I've put my 'and to yet! You need to be born to that kind o' thing to do it easy and natural, and me and Kit was going to clean out the hall just for the pleasure o' doing summat or other. But step into our room, sir, and sit down," she said, leading the Colonel to their snuggery.

"Why, this was the housekeeper's room!" he said, with surprise.

"Ay, sir, she knew how to look after herself did Mrs. Fangs; but me and Kit bought her off, and took it for ourselves," and the Colonel, contrasting the present occupants of The Chase with the former ones he had known, laughed as if he would never have done,

All was amicably settled. Kit and Sally joyfully relinquished their unwieldy posses sions to the rightful owner, and went back to their beloved work at the little farm, rich in experience and in an annuity of five hundred a year settled upon them by Colonel Marchville.

THE IDLER OUT OF DOORS.

FLOCKS AND HURDLES.

BY WALTER RAYMOND.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. ARTHUR ROUSE.



F all products of human handicraft thereis none more thoroughly belonging to the open air than the common wattled hur-

dle with which the shepherd folds his flock.

The sticks of which it is woven are the undergrowth of the woods. There, beneath the spreading branches where they grew, the hurdle-maker carries on his simple art, with the exception of his hurdling-hook and spar-hook, his only tools, using nothing foreign to the copse.

At the turn of the leaf, when hazel puts on yellow and maple turns to gold, when hips upon the briar grow soft and sloes are purple-black and nuts slip shell, then is the time when cutting underwood begins. The woodman's hook rings through the air. The bushes, young and straight, but seven years' growth at least, are soon cut low. Ash, maple, withy, hazel, dog's-timber and whip-top, just as they come, are laid in strings-long rows of sticks all top to butt one way-along below the forest trees. Their mossy mocks are bare. stumps of limbs, close cut, between the rind shine smooth and clean and gleam like flowers in the slanting sun. Only the shining holly stands, or clumps of laurel where the pheasants creep away. Then comes the fall. The ash grows bare; and

all the ruts along the ride are ruddy brown with parched and rustling leaves from oak and beech.

A little sorting done, and soon the hurdle-maker sets to work.

The smaller stuff is cast aside for peasticking, or gads to split for thatchers' spars. The rest he trims and gets it ready to his hand.

The woods by this are almost silent. The summer birds that come and go are The rest are mute. Only the robin and the wren have heart to sing the winter through. Our friend the woodman takes small note of these. He has an eye to game, and vermin too, and tells the keeper what he sees. Only when they shoot the cover, or the hounds come to draw the wood, does any sound beyond the murmur of the winter gale or creaking of the swaying branches overhead fall on his ears. Nailed to the ivy-covered elm beside the hunting-gate is the ominous notice—"Any person trespassing in these woods, whether gathering nuts or for any other purpose, will be prosecuted." But if you are free to go to him at his work he is glad of company and quite willing to talk.

On the ground in front of him lies a long block of timber bored with ten holes six clear inches apart. This he calls his "vlake." At his back stands a rail of ashen poles, or perhaps only a couple of hurdles, which he calls his "back-hurdle," and against this leans his store of various sticks. The ash is shining grey, the hazel brown, and maple rind is ribbed.

He is hale and strong, the man I know, and in the prime of life. In his left hand

he lifts a good stout stake. With four or five deft strokes, scarcely seeming to look at it the while, he points the bigger end into a spike as sharp as a bayonettop.

"Looky-zee! I've a-cut drough a shot. I do oftentimes do that. Now he wur meant vor a rabbit," he says, and holds out the stick.

The hook has cut through the little leaden pellet, but left it shining like a silver stud inlaid in the smooth white grain.

"Ah! there's plenty o' shot about in the wood, no fear." He reflects and laughs. "There, if did all kill. there'd be nothen left alive vor certain sure."

He thrusts the stake into one of the holes of his "vlake," taps it on the head with the flat

of his hook, and from that moment it is dubbed a "sail." So he goes on till all the holes are filled, for every hurdle must have ten uprights or "sails." That is unalterable as the laws of the Medes.

There is another thing that changes not -the reckoning by ancient feasts even in these days of almanacks.

"When do you begin?"

"Crewkerne Fair."

"And when is Crewkerne Fair?"

He turns to take a rod from his "backhurdle," and answers seriously and with an air of earnest explanation: "That's when we do begin." Then, wishing to be very accurate, he explains: "That is to zay, by good right. We don't never begin avore, but oftentimes we've a-got to wait

for the shoot-

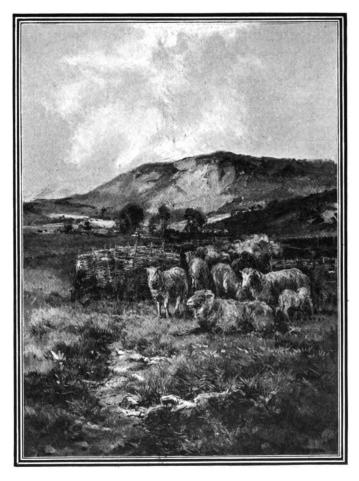
ing."

He lays the " rod " - all the wattling sticks are called rods -between two sails and quickly wreathes, first on one side then on the other, to the end. He holds it in a grip of iron; and twists a stick, bigger than your thumb, until the rind is all awry, so that it may not split as he turns it short around the outside "sail" and interweavesit back above itself.



And tells the keeper what he sees.

The wattling slowly rises above the sails as headds rod to rod and forcesthem together with his knee, on which he wears a leathern covering called a "knee-knap." Now and again a stick is too thick for his purpose; then with his spar-hook he cuts it half through at a blow, and, with a twist of the the wrist, deftly splits it through its length, five feet or six, true to the middle as if it had been ruled. He sticks the hook through the unfinished wattling, so as to have it "close-handy" and "han'-pat." But when he comes to the top rod, he twists it twice around the sails and calls it a "finisher." The proper height of a skin and drives him from his work; or frost makes his sticks brittle so that they break off short. Then, if the day be dry, he lights a fire to windward of his pile of rods and warms them into better heart.



The shepherd folds his ewes.

hurdle is two feet and ten inches. He never measures, but does it all by eye and hand. Snicks off the ends and trims the sails one length. And when the hurdles go to stack they vary scarce a hair.

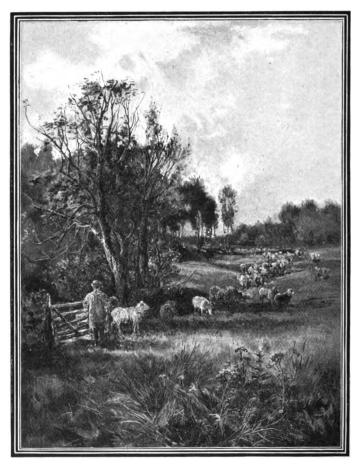
So he goes on the winter through; except when rain—running into beads of wet as big as beans on every branch and twig above his head—drenches him to the

The coiling smoke drifts slantwise, pale and grey, across the trees. It hides the trunks, wraps the brown branches in a thin transparent veil, and adds a deeper mystery to the bare December woods.

Sunshine is the boon he wants. Even the cold gleam of winter noon makes ash more pliant and the hazel tough. Under the passing cloud his sticks grow stiffer and more prone to snap. In early spring, where coppice has been cut, the mossy ground bursts all aglow with flowers. The wood lies lew and warm. Every little primrose root that pined in shade below the spreading leaves

place, and goes to felling oak and ripping bark.

The wood is on a slope. In summer its own beauty shuts it in; but when the leaves are shed, standing on the brow of



By the half-open gate the shepherd stands to count.

leaps up in joy to breathe the air and light and smile its yellow gladness to the sky. The frail anemone, in purest maiden white, blooms everywhere. The bluebells come in patches thick as grass.

Then, whilst the chiff-chaff's note is fresh and cuckoo's call is heard for the first time, the farmer's waggon rattles down the ride. A last good load of hurdles jolts away to down or mead. The woodman turns his back upon the

the hill you can see between the heads of trees across the valley to the range beyond. It is not far away. A village lies below, and straggling climbs the side. The shepherd's cot stands higher than the rest, with whitewashed walls and little windows black as night, just where the hedgerows stop, before the fenceless road cuts straight across the down.

Upon the crown is turf cropped bare and chumps of ragged gorse. Upon the

side are great square fields, some grass, some roots, and some in fresh-ploughed furrows shining red. A flock of peewits rises all at once, then wheels white-winged against a winter cloud, and lights again. To the south-west is a hollow coomb, and there, out o' the stroke o' the wind, the shepherd folds his ewes.

Very soon a winter music fills the air.

The ground is dotted o'er with lambs new-dropped, that lie rolled up as still as if they did not live, or stagger on their great, ungainly legs and bleat astonishment and doubt at this strange world. Only an hour or two and they find out the joke, and jump, and frisk, and race, and shake their tails for joy.

Meanwhile, day and night the shepherd finds enough to do. He is a man of guile, and has some quaint old ways to make another lamb accepted of an ewe bereaved. Oftentimes he robs the mother of a twin. He flays the dead and claps the skin upon a living lamb, and then the ewe is quite consoled to take it for her own.

But sometimes he must make appeal to the finer feeling of a sheep.

He offers her a lamb, but, looking for the one she bore and not to be deceived, she resents the insult. Then firmly into the ground he drives two hurdle stakes, puts her neck between, and binds them with a hazle shackle close above her head. Willy-nilly she must a foster-mother be; for the lambkin has no scruple, but wiggles his tail and makes himself at home. Sometimes the shepherd lets her free, but still she turns and butts the little impostor, and so at once he makes her fast again. A day or two later he comes with a strange dog. So strong is her maternal instinct that this time she will turn and do fierce battle for the lamb, and after that she always brings it up.

The picture-making quality of flocks and hurdles is beyond the reach of pen.

When buds of spring begin to swell upon the boughs, and yellow-hammers sing

upon the hedgerow-spray, through the sandy hollow slowly winds the flock. The shepherd walks in front, his long-haired dog comes wisely wagging on behind. Out of the shadow as they pass the silver gleam of March lights on the sheep and glistens on the five-barred gate across the lane.

By the half-open gate the shepherd stands to count. He takes them as they pass by twos or threes, and counts by scores. If the odd number at the end come true, he knows that they are right. He might lose one, but can't lose twenty very well.

The sheep go scampering away to fold-One half the ground, already fed, is rough with bitten remnants of the rind of purple swedes; but where it still looks green the squares of hurdles stand. The broken line of greyish-brown is sharp against the distant hills. The stakes rise bold and dark upon the misty blue. It is a wealth of colour, but subtle so that mind may help the sense. The mating plovers now come circling round with plaintive cries; and overhead, amongst white fleecy clouds, the skylark pours its melody unseen. There is a "creep" of upright bars with wooden rollers, so that lambs pass out and bite the sweetest of to-morrow's fold, Then they lie down close to their wattled wall and sleep and thrive.

When May is middle aged and past, and freckled cowslips full blown in the close, the ragged flock lies scattered on the glade. Upon the prickly, shining gorse, and on the brambles sprawling o'er the ditch, hang locks and tags of wool. The linnets, building for a second brood, pluck it from off the thorns to line their nests. The panting sheep at mid-day chose the hedgerow's shade or lie mid-field beneath the spreading oak, now rich in leaf. The starlings come and perch upon their backs.

Down through the valley winds a narrow stream, high-banked with alder overgrown. You cannot see the water for the bush; but where the path runs down the field aslant it finds a wooden footbridge by a pollard willow tree. A little way below there is an open space well built around with stone. And there, some day in early June, a hatch is brought to bay the river back, and soon a pool, bankhigh, shines like a mirror to the clear blue sky. The flock is penned close to the waterside; and then at once the fun of sheep-washing begins.

In days gone by the whole time of the wool-harvest was one long festivity. washers stood in the brook bare-armed, the water to their waists. The sheep were thrown in from the banks, and caught and plunged until the wool was clean. Then they passed out, half-drowned, along the shallow way between the walls, to drip and bleat and dry between the sunshine and the grass. All the folk from farm, and neighbours too, were there to watch the sport. The "mirschy-making toads o' bwoys" and giggling maids who filled the horn with cider. And every girl got kissed as sure as the light, and many a man got pushed in with the sheep. For on those days of June were jokes enough, and laughter too, to last the summer through. These things were harvest then that now are work, and work is serious, take it as you will. Only the Idler, wandering down the path, stands for a minute on the bridge to watch a sheep or two thrown in and plunged with poles. The jokes are few to-day, the talking most professional. "There, that's enough vor thik one, let un goo."

But formerly the neighbours made a gang of staidish men and spry young chaps to go from farm to farm and shear the flocks. They were all friends and welcome where they went. The feasting then began in early morn. Right in the middle of the breakfast board there stood a beechen bowl of furmity—wheat boiled in milk with figs and chips of cinnamon. And there was sweetest wheaten bread home-baked, and ale home-brewed, and plenty of the best of everything belonging to the land.

Then all day long on the barn's floor they sheared, each listening to the snip of other blades, and eager to do quicker than the rest. The yellow fleeces lay upon the ground. The ewe, new-shorn and white, with shear-marks straight and true, ran back to the familiar oak, and on the golden buttercups laid down. And there was feast at noon and feast at night. And in the dimmet after work, in the homefield around the Welsh-nut tree, they turned to sports till dark, and then within the house to dance and sing till morn. The revel never ended till the daylight But everything must have an end came. at last.

High on the hedgerow bank against the lane, to stop a gap the hunters made, all through the winter months a broken hurdle stood. Its sails were lank and all askew. Its rods were loose and torn abroad. It stayed there till in spring the gipsies passed, and then it went to make a wayside fire. Just up the drove its ashes lie, a round black hearth upon the bright greensward.

And farther down the wood the hurdlemaker was at work this year.



BEHIND THE MASK.

A SKETCH.

BY J. FRIEDLANDER.

ILLUSTRATED BY CLAUDE A. SHEPPERSON.

Dans toute semme aimante il y a une prêtresse du passé, la gardienne pieuse de quelque affiction dont l'objet a disparu.—
AMIEL.



AITER, the bill of fare!" This was spoken in the off-hand manner of an habitué of restaurants. The speaker was a tall young gentleman in a

dress suit, and leaning on his arm was a lady in a mask, whom he was escorting into a private side-room of a well-known, fashionable restaurant in St. Petersburg.

"Yes, sir! in a moment!" replied the waiter, in obsequious tones, shaking in somewhat comical fashion the coattails of his dress-coat. His shaven face smirked with an obliging smile. He apparently knew his guest and was eager to serve him. With a second and still more comical shuffle of the coat-tails, he handed his customer the menu.

Adjusting his pince-nez, the young gentleman glanced at its contents. His somewhat troubled face frowned for a moment as his delicate hand feverishly pulled at his small, fashionably trimmed, auburn beard. His outward appearance denoted fashionable spruceness of dress with a demeanour which betokened, in reality, little regard for personal adornment. His white satin tie was slightly inclined sideways, the waistcoat was partly unbuttoned, and his long hair hung down in perfect

disorder on a forehead which betokened considerable intellectual power.

The lady in the mask who accompanied him stood motionless in the room. She was attired in a dark silk dress, which set off admirably her tall and graceful figure.

"Pardon, madam, am I to have the honour of selecting the dishes for our supper?"

The lady replied in the affirmative. She had a resonant, melodious, contralto voice which agreeably filled the small room. Carelessly turning round, she sat down on the sofa, and, her movements disengaging the train of her dress, disclosed a pair of small feet of high instep, daintily shod.

. She began to fan herself with a magnificent fan of white feathers, evidently awaiting in the interval the preparation of the supper.

"This also implies, I presume," said her companion, "that I am to have the choice of wines?"

"Yes," replied the lady in her sonorous and well-modulated voice, the gentle swaying of her fan now becoming slower.

"Then, Parphen," said he, addressing the waiter, who all the time had been standing composedly in a respectful attitude, "then, Parphen, give us a salad of fresh lobsters—fresh, do you hear? Sterlet grille, tartar sauce, some good Chatreuse, juicy and not over roasted—and—and iced punch. . . . Of wines?"

"Oh, yes, my Claude Vougeau—mine, mind you, and Moet Chandon, the same that I usually take. Will you remember all this?"

"Gracious!" simpered the waiter as if offended, "this is not the first time that I have served my noble patrons!"

"What I now want," continued the gentleman, without heeding the waiter's remark, "is, that you should bring what I have ordered, close the portière, lock the door, and take yourself off. Do you understand?"

The waiter gave a shrug of his shoulders, as if deprecating the supposition that there was any possibility of his not understanding the orders given him, and, hurrying away to prepare the things, left the room.

"May I ask if my arrangements meet with your gracious approval?" asked the gentleman, turning to the lady in a smiling and affable manner. He had sat himself down on the sofa next to her.

"I envy you your appetite!" she said laughingly, covering her face with her fan.

"And what think you, my mysterious stranger, do we not all live in virtue of our appetites? Appetites artificially excited, nervous, morbid—but appetites. As a matter of fact we are never hungry, yet we are more gluttonous than ravens. In a similar sense we are not by nature passionate or impetuous, yet woman is always on our mind. It is not love at all! It is simply an artificially excited sensation induced by her presence, a strange, mesmeric influence drawn from her subtle, beautiful eyes and extending to her soft satin hands."

Whilst speaking he was gently assisting to unbutton and draw off the long, soft glove from the hand of the lady. She did not resist, was not noticing it, as it were. When he stopped speaking the glove was off, and taking her bare slender hand, he pressed it to his lips.

Suddenly and swiftly the hand was withdrawn, and dropped from under his lips.

"Pardon! Pardon!" he exclaimed, catching hold of her hand again; "but you are acting contrary to our compact. You promised me this. If you will obstinately

insist on wearing your mask, I, too, will not forgo my privileges."

"Very well, I will not resist," she said.
"I certainly gave you permission to kiss my hand, and I will abide by that promise. But admit, is it not humiliating to a woman to be told——?" and excitably swaying her fan before her face, she yielded her hand to her companion.

"Have I not told you before," replied he, "that I will be submissive, that I will even fall in love with you, although I cannot see your face under that objectionable mask. But I will not tell you falsehoods. My privilege is to tell the truth to all, to tell it, if you like to put it so, with artistic force, picturesquely and dramatically, but still the truth and only the truth. This is where the secret and source of my power as a feuilletonist lies. In this, too, lies the secret of the success of my journalistic writings. But above all else I value that success because it has afforded me the opportunity and pleasure of having this interview with you. Although I do not quite believe---"

"Oh, how intolerable you are!" interrupted the lady, with a simulated air "How many of coquettish vexation. times have I repeated that I am unknown to you? Your feuilletons interested me. I love talent, and all aspiring talent. In a moment of eccentricity I wrote a note to you and made an appointment for a masquerade meeting-to my surprise you keep this appointment. We meet, I take your arm, and—we are here. confess that I did not expect it. Do you. indeed, receive so few letters of this kind? Do you believe them all? you run after the writers so promiscuously?"

"Oh, no! My valet every week empties quite a basketful of such letters, many of which are not even read through. I believe very little that is in them, and do not by any means run after the writers; but, to be frank, I am gratified when woman runs after me."

"Why was it then that I received such a special mark of attention at your hands, O great feuilletonist?" asked the lady, smiling.

"It was, I suppose, because of some undefined spiritual and intellectual affinity which I detected in your letter," was the prompt reply. "Your note breathes such

ready wit and divine grace that I-that I became — seriously interested. I must confess to my admiration of your literary gifts, for your letter betrays the art of an accomplished writer. Flattery aside, I discovered in you a confrère. Yes! above all things a confrère in a woman, and a woman, too, who I am convinced beyond doubt must be beautiful."

"How does this follow, you feuilletonistic lover of truth?

Surely, I did not take off my mask?"

"Oh, oh! do you think that we men about town can be mistaken as regards this? Strange as it may seem, the face of a woman is sure to conform with her figure. Exceptions there are certainly, but if you consider exceptions, you have two-headed calves and other monstrosities. Exceptions must not be taken into account. But the glimpse of the figure of a woman, her refined taste

and conversation, the shape of her hands and feet, the slenderness of her waist, afford a sufficient clue, if not an index, of what that face must needs be. I may be mistaken as regards the *contour* of her nose, or the colour of her eyes and hair, but as to the general characteristics of the face, its mysterious charm—of this I

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"Well, what do you say to my request?"

can always form an impression. As regards you," he added, "I wager that yours is the face of a nervous, passionate, and reserved nature, a combination of pride and some cruelty. In repose your face expresses the untroubled happiness of a nymph; in anger, the stern attitude of a stone sphinx."

"E n ough! enough!" burst out the lady with a nervous laugh. "Your elaborate panegyrics of my face are, I

see, designed to tempt me to tear off my mask. 'See here,' you would have me say. 'Look! You are right, I am both a sphinx and a nymph.' But listen; I will not torment you any longer. I will consent to take off my mask, but under this condition," and she went on solemnly and earnestly; "if you wish to see my face, you must tell me the story of your first love. You need mention no names, only you must truthfully narrate

it, for I have the art of detecting falsehoods. If you will do this, then I will avow myself."

She almost whispered these last words, falling away into an enticing and entreating mood.

An awkward silence followed. The gentleman became moody, and with downcast eyes was pulling desperately at his beard. The waiter had fortunately at this juncture appeared with the dishes and wine. Gliding silently like a phantom across the room, he was setting the supper with quiet expedition.

The silver stand holding the iced champagne and the wines formed a beautiful centre-piece, and the lights of the two candelabra threw a bright gleam over the polished plate and the snowy white appointments. Everything being arranged, the waiter, without breaking the prevailing silence, withdrew—this acolyte in the temple of Epicurus knew his business to the letter.

The lady at last broke the spell.

"Well, what do you say to my request?" she asked in a low, faint, trembling voice.

"I can't comply with it!" exclaimed the young gentleman. He was inwardly irritated, and commenced to pace up and down the room, walking in quick, rapid strides.

"Well, let us have our supper, which, by the way, will be extremely uncomfortable for me with this mask on, and after that we can part in peace," she gently added.

"Tis such an odd request," he went on, paying no attention to her words, and shrugging his shoulders as he continued to promenade up and down the room. "You are, perhaps, the wife or relative of some confrere of the pen, and are on the hunt for subject matter. I have no wish that the story of my first love, be it what it may, should be made the sport of newspapers."

"Your love story will not be heard outside the walls of this room." "But I do not choose to tell it to any adventuress," he said, growing quite irritated.

"Sir, you are impertinent!" exclaimed the lady, to his astonishment, yet not without some strange sort of pleasurable feeling. "But I understand you, and rather like your presumption. Do not relate your story to me. Let us have our supper and have done with it. Sit down beside me and pour me out some wine."

She threw her fan upon the mantelpiece and took a seat at the table, motioning her companion to do the same.

"And the mask?"

He stood gazing intently on her, as if trying to pierce with his look the sphinx behind the dark velvet and long thick lace of that impenetrable visor, through the eye-holes of which glowed, like two living coals of flame, the black, flashing eyes of the unknown lady.

"I shall not raise my mask. There is no occasion for it. Now that you suspect me of being an adventuress, I do not wish to show my features. Let us drop the subject, and after supper part like clever people who understand each other well."

"If I have offended you, for God's sake forgive me! You cannot, I am sure, help knowing that you are an original character, and exercise so strange a fascination."

"I have nothing to forgive," answered the lady in more softened tones. "What you said was natural enough, as you have not even seen my face. As to my fascination, you must ascribe it to my love for that which is noble and romantic—a feeling which always blossoms out of the birth of man's first love; probably it was found in your love as well. Was it not?" Quite naïvely was this question put.

"Yes; perhaps so, but---"

He had taken a seat at the table, without, however, touching any dish.

"But what?" she asked, endeavouring to pass a piece of bread through the lace of the mask.

"But it must be uncomfortable to eat

in that manner. You compel me to——" rising again to his feet.

"I compel you to make me eat comfortably," she said, bursting into a short, sharp laugh.

"Not for the sake of that," he went on, "but for the sake of—look what a beautiful chin you have. I wish to see your lips. I do wish to see them. I have just caught a glimpse of them whilst you were pushing aside the lace. What a charming vision it was."

"And so for the sake of a charming vision of an adventuress you will relate the story of your first, probably your best and purest love?" insinuated the lady, shaking her head.

"No, not for that reason," almost angrily he replied; "but simply because such an original and romantic request deserves to be complied with."

"So at last you begin to appreciate the nature of my request. It was high time. Pray begin, for it is truly inconvenient for me to eat. If I do not take great care I shall get my fork entangled in the lace."

"Very well, I will tell you my story, although it is no light matter for me to do so. Why, you will learn later on."

He resumed his walk across the room, his manner was somewhat excited and his speech animated.

"Listen," he said. "I was a student at a University in a southern province, and she was in the highest class of the gymnasium. She was young and beautiful, and came of a well-to-do family. When I first met her she was between seventeen and eighteen, and bore the promise in her lithesome figure of becoming a rare beauty. She was of a somewhat proud nature, and already showed symptoms of developing romantic feeling and passion—the highest charm in a grown-up maiden child."

"A consciously happy nymph, or a future stone sphinx! Eh?" interjected the lady.

"Ah! I see you can be sarcastic."

"Well, never mind, continue."

"Yes, that young passionate creature I ound to be an ardent worshipper of new ideas. I, too, participated in that worship. Coming in contact with our fellow-students, and joining in their meetings and discussions, it was only natural that one should become fired with the prevailing spirit of enthusiasm. And thus it was that we were thrown together. Then we met also on other occasions, on river excursions and at picnic parties; and we talked ourselves into believing that we were of that stuff of which the world's heroes and heroines are made, and that we were going to achieve great things.

"Fondly we gazed into each others eyes, and felt, oh! such an inward spiritual peace that it transcended all pleasure. It seemed as if neither kisses nor embraces were wanted to complete our happiness. It was sufficient for me to gaze into those wonderful eyes, pure and serene, and imagine that I was the fabled hero and she the Sometimes down the river we heroine. floated, the splash of the oars making fit accompaniment to the merry music of the joyous, silvery laughter of our party, and even the trees nodded their luxuriant foliage in homage to us as we sailed past the embankment. Our companions were noisy, but we were so happy and so calm with the fulness of our love that we forgot, as we held each others hands, even our own selves in that brief dream-ecstacy."

The feuilletonist paused in his recital. As he recalled to memory those scenes in his past they seemed to again move him with strong emotion, such was its effect on the working of his captivating artistic mind, a quality which contributed to the charm of his stories.

"Well, what followed?" asked the lady in tremulous accents strangely unlike her real voice.

"Followed!" he cried, "a commonplace sequence enough followed. Our student hero finished his course at the University, and went to seek work and fame in the capital. A fine elastic term is that word 'work!' Darwin was a worker, and so is the lowest rogue who picks pockets. They both call it work. I determined on pursuing a literary career, for I felt that I had some talent for it, and I conceived for myself the rôle of a national prophet. I applied for employment at various places. 'We have enough of our own staff,' they told me. But I was conscious of my ability, and refused to bury in oblivion the gifts which God had given me. I mingled with the general crowd, and wrote for various newspapers and magazines. And so I became a scribbler, a feuilletonist, and achieved a certain public reputation. Waiters in restaurants respect me, editors court my favour, and even ladies run after me because I have a name; and so I write, and write, and think."

He concluded with a bitter shrug of his shoulders, and pouring out a glass of red wine drank it off at one draught.

Remembering himself, he turned to the lady. "And now, won't you take some?" he said, half apologetically.

"No, not now!" She stopped him with a gesture, and, in an eager whisper, asked:

"And she, what became of her?"

"She," he replied, "I do not know. At first we corresponded, but that soon ceased, I felt ashamed. How could I propose to her, I-a ci-devant hero, a haphazard penny-a-liner. And then, besides, in the midst of the busy hubbub of this metropolis, love took to itself She probably remained in the wings. province. Who knows? Maybe she married. How can I tell? Five years are now gone-five years! And I have heard nothing of her."

"Do you never think of her?"

"Yes, often, especially during the long vigil of my sleepless nights, for I am a sufferer from insomnia. It is probably the result of a gay life and a general

nervous strain, the effect of always living in those wretched furnished apartments, in reality outwardly ornamented tombs wherein lie buried the whole of bachelordom. By the way, I have now finished I have nothing more to add to my story. But you need not take off your mask. I cannot exactly understand why I divulged all this to you. At all events, I do not wish to purchase at the price of these reminiscences still dear to me even the highest pleasure, the pleasure of beholding your charming face. Let it be as you proposed. Let us have our supper and say farewell."

He poured out two glasses of wine and raised his glass to touch hers.

She sat motionless in her mask. Then, suddenly rising from the sofa and drawing herself up to the full height of her graceful figure, cried out in ringing tones:

"No! I keep my promises. You have not bought as the price of your story the disclosure of my identity. Your narrative, indeed, shows me that you are in reality much better than you pretend to be, and therefore you deserve perfect trust, and I shall accordingly remove my mask. But before you see my face I may as well tell you who I am."

The feuilletonist bowed.

"I am," she said, "a provincial actress, engaged in Ascoldoff's Dramatic Company—have you heard of it?"

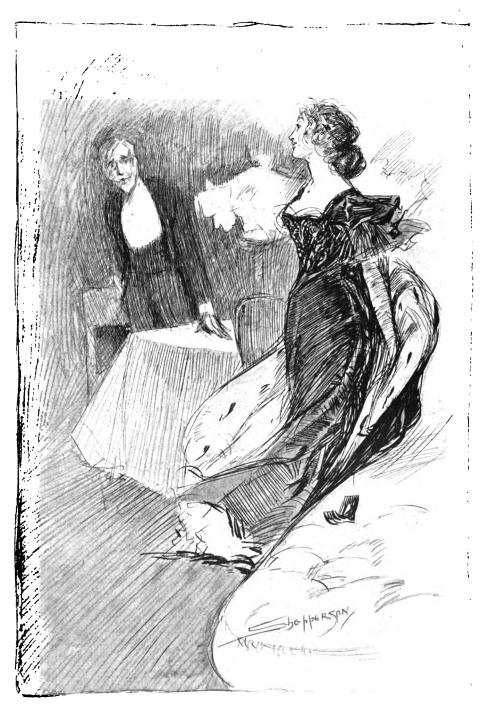
"Oh, yes; it's fame has long since reached us. It is said that you create quite a sensation wherever you appear."

"Well, perhaps I may leave here an equally great sensation," said the young actress, and gracefully raising her hand to her face, threw off the mask.

For a moment he staggered, startled by what he saw. He passed his hands over his eyes, to see if it were not all a dream. An involuntary exclamation burst from his lips.

"Zenia! Eugéne Alexandrovna! Zenia, is it you?"

"At last you know me! At last,"



For a moment he staggered, startled by what he saw.

said the young woman in a trembling voice. "So you could not recognise my voice? Oh, shame! But I will not be cruel; it is not easy to recognise the voice of a skilful artiste who knows how to control and has mastered the use of that organ."

She said this, all the while looking tenderly on the friend of her youth. He stood before her, pale and motionless, then suddenly seizing her hand, passionately kissed it.

"I hope this is not evoked by an artificially-excited appetite due to women's soft hands," said the lady in mocking tones.

Gently she leaned upon him. He

raised his head, and with a sad smile, but with glad enraptured eyes, he lovingly gazed upon her. He tried to speak, but could not.

"You see," she said, softly, "your heroine is not lost. She suffered and struggled as you did, although travelling on a different road. And is not work in the realm of Art and Life a noble work? And is not victory in that sphere a true and grand victory?"

His head inclined towards her, but his lips were still silent.

She leaned towards him, and with a long kiss nestled herself in the bosom of the lover of her youth.



THE SECOND NAPOLEON.

BY F. G. WALTERS.

WITH TWO PORTRAITS.



HE fascination of the Napole-onic legend seems to increase as the century grows old. When it

was young, The Quarterly Review (October, 1815) talked of Napoleon's "political death," and assured its readers that "posterity would not consider him a great man." But while the First and Third Napoleons have been the theme of innumerable writers, little attention has been paid to the Second one. True, his crown, like those of Edward V. and Louis XVII., was but a titular one, yet his history, though brief, is full of deep and pathetic interest, and, had he lived, might have altered that of Europe. Known to the world of readers as Duke of Reichstadt only, he was to himself Napoleon the Second, and, there is little doubt, cherished in his own mind the ambition of regaining the great Emperor's throne, and making his name once again famous, though in a far more laudable form.

On the 20th March, 1811, the thunder of 101 guns announced to Paris the birth of an heir to an Empire greater than that of Charlemagne. The accouchement of the Empress had taken place in the presence of twenty-three witnesses of high rank and office that no story like that of "the warming-pan," which clung to James the Second's son, might be floated. De Bausset, Prefect of the

Palace, in his curious and candid memoirs, mentions, as something remarkable, that he saw the baby King of Rome in the arms of the Comtesse de Montesquiou, who crossed the room in which the Prefect was in order to reach the apartments of the new-born Prince. He notes, as something unusual, the redness of the baby's face, also that he continued crying, which afforded us much pleasure, as it announced life and strength. The Prefect's domestic experience must have been small.

Universal joy (according to De Bausset) was shared by France at the event, and congratulations from the European Courts were added. The City of Paris presented the young King of Rome with a magnificent gilt cradle in shape of a vessel, representing the civic arms. De Bausset notes what he calls a singular event, and others may have called an omen, as happening at the first Council of Ministers after the happy event. An invitation to breakfast to its members succeeded the Council. Emperor had hardly left the table when the cord from which was suspended a magnificent lustre of crystal from Mont Cenis gave way, and the table was broken to pieces.

Courtly ceremonial and elaborate etiquette, the pomp, pageantry, and fêtes of what an observer described as "the most splendid Court in Europe," surrounded the infancy of the King of Rome. Magnificent preparations announced his baptism. Among those who attended were the Mayors of Rome and Hamburg. Much was made of their greeting to each other of "Good-morning, neighbour!" as proving the union of action and power which

directed the administration of so vast an Empire. Shortly afterwards Emperor and Empress visited Dresden, whither flocked many august personages and some of the tributary kings to share in the various and constant functions and festivities which marked the arrival of the autocrat of France and Central Europe. But while the pomp, pride, and circumstance of the colossal power of Napoleon seemed at its greatest, the end was beginning. The invasion of Russia was the task which Napoleon was to commence on the completion of the Dresden gaieties and the homage of his widespread vassals.

De Bausset had been left behind by his Imperial master with a special commission which showed how much was his baby heir to the Emperor. The Prefect was to wait for the portrait of the King of Rome which Gerard was painting, and immediately it was finished it was encased on the roof of De Bausset's carriage, who then, travelling day and night, commenced his journey to the seat of war. On the 6th September, 1812, after thirty-seven days had elapsed, he reached Napoleon's tent at 9 a.m. the day before that of the bloody battle of the Moscowa.

The Emperor was delighted with the portrait, his eyes expressed a tenderness very rare in those cold, grey, piercing orbs. He ordered it to be placed on a chair outside his tent, calling the officers of his household and the group of generals waiting close by to receive his orders to share his pleasure. "Gentlemen," he added, when they were gathered round the picture (which represents the baby King half-lying in his cradle and playing with a little globe and sceptre), "if my son was fifteen, believe me, he himself would be here, in the midst of so many brave men, in place of his portrait." The picture remained outside the Imperial tent, officers and men alike crowding round it.

But from the moment when the proud hope of a dynasty was thus made dear to a devoted army which shared its chief's exultation, his downward course began. Moscowa was succeeded by all the carnage and horrors of the Russian campaign. Reverse followed reverse, and on the 29th March, 1814, the Empress, whom Napoleon had left as Regent while opposing the Allies, was advised by the Council to leave Paris—a very doubtful On that day the courts of the Tuileries were filled with carriages, waggons, and equipages of all kinds. a.m. everything was ready. Marie Louise, accompanied by her boy and the ladiesin-waiting, got into the carriage. little King of Rome being asked to follow his mother, refused with tears, saying that he would not leave the Palace. M. de Camsy had to assist his governess, Mdm. de Montesquiou, in placing him, against his inclination, in the carriage. The precocious child, though but three years old, seemed to feel instinctivelyand rightly-that if he departed there could be no return. Nor was there. He never saw his father again. Although Napoleon, when his abdication and his sovereignty of Elba was settled, cherished the hope that he would be joined by his wife and son, neither then nor during the hundred days could he either by negotiation or stratagem effect their return to him, and he never again saw either.

Though carried to Austria at the early age of four, the young Napoleon had imbibed some early impressions and recollections which never faded. His intelligence was remarkable—quite different from the small estimate formed of it by The Monthly Magazine of 1830, which includes him in the category of dull sons of famous fathers—and in all respects his behaviour was far older than his years. Reserve—such as Napoleon first showed when the command of the Republican Army of Italy placed him in the position which developed into the throne of France -marked the young Prince's communication with all around him. An Austrian atmosphere encircled him, and every

allusion to his father's fame or career was by the order of the Austrian Emperor forbidden. Every endeavour was made to induce him to look on himself as an Austrian Prince and Duke of Reichstadt alone. His childhood was never mentioned, and it was hoped that he had no early recollection of his position.

But the silent, thoughtful, reticent boy,

though for a time none dreamed was to himself only the heir of Napoleon. This was proved in a remarkable way at an early age to the astonishment and discomfiture of his Hapsburg relatives. One of his uncles showed him one day an exquisite medal, struck in honour of himself as an infant, asking him if he knew "who that was." The

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The King of Rome.

looked steadily at the Archduke, a gleam of pride lighting the statuesque face and finely-cut lips which so resembled those of his father. "It is I," he said with dignity, "when I was King of His tutors averred that the recollection of his father's fame and his own former rank were always vivid in his mind. Every endeavour to make him learn his mother's language was at first in vain. He would not repeat a word, and until he was older his resolution was not to be altered. When at last he consented to study German he learnt it with ease. One of his tutors, as the result of years of close observation, declared that he was distinguished by deep thoughtfulness, strong reasoning powers, and an unvarying love of truth.

When he was alone with his tutors

tortured them by an incessant questioning as to his father's achievements and history. In this dilemma they at last ventured to put the matter before the Emperor of Austria. who judiciously gave them permission to give the boy the fullest information, and with this he filled his mind, but his speculations he never uttered. An abnormal re-

serve and deep reflection on the subject marked his conduct, but his mind was evidently intent upon it. When he was ten years old the news of the death of the "Conqueror and Captive of the Earth," who had been eating out his heart on the lonely rock in the Atlantic, arrived at Schönbrunn where his son was then The intelligence most deeply affected him, and he was for several days constantly in tears.

Thenceforward, in one sense, like Shakespeare's Richard, he was himself In his own proud and reticent mind he was Napoleon the Second, and not only so, but also in the estimation of thousands of secret adherents, who passionately bewailed Celui-là, as under the Bourbon rule they called the dead The phrase was a password Emperor. among those of like sympathies, and they were many in all ranks, for the glamour of "the star of his glory" was yet powerful; nor had the reigning family conciliated and attached France as a nation to themselves-" they had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing." Thus it was that a vast party secretly and silently waited for the adolescence of the boy whom they regarded as the future ruler of France.

He seemed instinctively to know this. He had much of the silence and firmness which characterised his father when mounting the first heights of his career. devoted himself to his studies with ardour and perseverance unvarying. acquired the knowledge of several languages and wrote essays on various subjects which showed a high degree of talent. Of the classics, the only one which really delighted him, as it has many another in whom were the germs of a great soldier, was Cæsar's Commentaries. Every book on the French Revolution and Empire which he could procure he read with avidity, and indeed of these he formed a splendid collection.

On the completion of his education his grandfather conferred on him the title of Duke of Reichstadt, to which revenues of the value of £20,000 per annum were attached. A separate household was assigned to him, and he was treated with the etiquette and deference customary in the case of an Austrian Prince, which it was wished he should in all respects become. His surroundings, however, in no wise altered his own secret views. He was to himself not a member of the Royal Family of Hapsburg, but Napoleon the Second:

and, with the calm resolution and farseeing perspicuity that marked his father's best days, he never ceased to cherish the vision of regaining that father's throne, but with the assent of the European Powers and by the wish of the French people. Nor were his aspirations without reason. In appearance he was "every inch a king"; his genius resembled his father's, his accomplishments were many, his manners were charming, but with a dignity never varied by Napoleon's fitful He was a fine horseman, abruptness. and, as Burke had said long before, the new monarch of France must be always in the saddle. He was an indefatigable student of military matters until he became a thoroughly practical officer. enthusiasm for tactics and drill was equal to that of Frederick the Great. His favourite recreation was hunting.

But withal the young man thus gifted and qualified for the throne, had Fate allowed him to obtain it, was wise enough to perceive his father's errors as well as the splendours of his achievements. In confidential conversations with his grandfather and Metternich he said that his object in life was to make himself not unworthy of the glory of his father, taking care to avoid the rocks on which he split. And especially did he avow his intention of never becoming the plaything of faction or the instrument of intrigue-"Never ought the son of Napoleon to condescend to play the miserable part of an adventurer."

An Austrian officer admitted to his intimacy and confidence stated that in all their conversations the career of Napoleon was the theme on which his son spoke with deep and passionate admiration. He wrote a very remarkable paper when the revolution of July, 1830, sent the last Bourbon king into exile and events seemed to point to the possibility of his dreams being realised, which showed a clear understanding of the state of political affairs, a mingling of

ambition and prudence remarkable in so young a man, and a sketch of his own character which was faithful in all respects.

Meanwhile, however, there was another factor in the problem of his future which was becoming conspicuous—the state of his bodily health. The indomitable and

tireless mind was not matched with a strong physique. He employed his strong will in mental bodily exercises without cessation. But at a certain point his medical tendants saw that his physical powers were unequal to the incessant strain upon them. Hе much was taller than his father, and outgrew his strength. He had not that recuperative

power of sleeping at any moment amid the tremendous responsibilities of a campaign which Napoleon possessed. As he grew rapidly, symptoms ominous enough showed themselves. Hoarseness, cough, and other signs of chest disease were conspicuous. Lassitude frequently overwhelmed him. He hid all these things as far as possible. Like the Czar Nicholas, who when dying from pneumonia mounted his horse and insisted, against

the entreaties of his physician, who held his stirrup, in reviewing his troops, the young Napoleon was persistent in attending drills and manœuvres. But he courteously, though firmly, declined to listen to his doctors,

It was in 1831 at the house of Lord Cowley, then British Ambassador at

Vienna, that the Duke of Reichstadt first made his recognised appearance society -Duke to them, to himself only the second: Napoleon. His dignified and graceful manners, his ripe wisdom, far older than his years, his originality of idea and selfcontained power were noticed by all in that brilliant and varied assembly. Varied indeed it was, and sugges-



The Duke of Reichstadt.

tive of many reflections to the son of Napoleon. For prominent among the representative figures there were two princes of the house of Bourbon and the Ambassador of Louis Philippe, then occupying the Bourbons' former throne; there was the representative of Charles X, the "monarch retired from business"; there was Gustavus Vasa, the heir by birth to the throne of Sweden, and the Ambassador of Bernadotte, actual monarch and

formerly one of Napoleon's lieutenants. On this occasion the young Napoleon met Marmont, one of his father's favourite marshals, and with him he had a conversation which must have been full of melancholy interest. Such a concourse of opposite interests and traditions would have been productive of deepest emotions in a far less original mind than that of this brooding and gifted boy. But the very fact of there being so many proofs before him of the instability of French feeling served to nourish his secret hopes. Marmont saw him frequently, and gave him many reminiscences of his father's campaigns, and increased his military ardour.

In 1831, the Emperor of Austria gave him a lieutenant-colonelcy in his army, and the command of a battalion of the Vienna garrison. Young as he was, the Prince showed the qualities of an experienced officer, commanding with a precision and a military eye which surprised competent critics. He was highly popular, his men were devoted to him, and he was an ideal officer. Those, however, who observed him at this time (the summer of 1831), noticed his air of deep melancholy. He threw himself into his duties with the restless energy which had marked his father's best days. He allowed himself only four hours' sleep, though his rapid and debilitating cough sufficiently showed how necessary was a far greater amount of repose. He complained to his physician of his wretched body that sunk under his will. The physician answered that he had set a will of iron in a body of glass, and that indulgence of his will must be fatal. In point of fact, the Prince was really wearing himself out. His whole being was concentrated on military work; he ate little, slept little, and grew livid and thin as a skeleton.

His grandfather was appealed to by the doctors, and he was formally ordered to repose at Schönbrunn. There the change of life and medical treatment caused a surprising improvement. But immediately he felt this, he once more commenced his military inspections, varying them by going hunting, as the chase was "the image of war." The natural results followed. Pulmonary symptoms reappeared. They grew more marked, and most reluctantly the Prince took to his bed. He underwent the course of the disease in its most characteristic and fatal form. And on the 22nd July, 1832, the second Napoleon expired on the same bed in which his father, when at the zenith of his power he dictated terms as a conqueror to Austria, slept at Schönbrunn.

Thus ended the brief career of the son of Napoleon, whom the great Emperor had at his birth prophesied was to inherit and consolidate his power. That he possessed great abilities is clear, but the fiery soul out-fretted its tenement of clay.



A GOOD INVESTMENT.

BY EDWIN SHARPE GREW.

ILLUSTRATED BY D. B. WATERS.



the afterdeck of the
steamer from
Beira the
homewardbound passengers sat
under the
murky awning bearing

the delay and the heat very patiently. The steamer was already two days late, and the Rt. Hon. Courtenay Blake had still not arrived. But to all the passengers on board as well as to the Captain of the Hurst Castle (ss. Beira and Southampton —a line of which Mr. Blake is a director) the name of Courtenay Blake is that of a man whom all South Africa is accustomed to wait for; so that nobody thought of complaining or even of wondering at the delay. Mr. Blake was coming overland from Manicaland, and the Beira railway through the country is not yet completed. Beira itself is not in a very complete state either; there is no township of importance, but only buildings which look like docksheds; there is a wide stretch of reeking mud at low tide, and there are no amusements. the whole, therefore, the passengers found it least tedious to while away the waiting days on the deck of the steamer, playing whist, drinking warm bottled beer, and smoking cigars of the brand which at home one is usually offered for knocking down a cocoa-nut.

The arrival of Jervoise—Sampson Jervoise, Esq., Mining Expert—had been a diversion; and Jervoise himself a not un-

welcome addition to the few passengers going home from Beira.

He had arrived late one evening when night had settled on the harbour, and had arrived in a shore-boat rowed by a couple of the Asiatic coolies who do most of the ship unloading of Beira.

The first intimation of his arrival was furnished to some of the first-class passengers who were playing late whist on the saloon deck. They were engrossed in the game when a voice suddenly startled them coming from close under the ship's quarter.

"Ahoy! there," it cried, "Hurst Castie!" One of the passengers got up half startled and leaned over the ship's rail.

"Who the deuce are you?" he said.

"Sampson Jervoise, Esq., Mining Expert," answered the voice out of the blackness.

"Well, what do you want?" pursued the passenger.

"I want to come on board, confound you!" responded the voice. "Haven't you had my telegram?"

"No, I haven't," said the passenger; and one of the ship's officers coming up at the moment, he added to him, "Look here, Officer, I think this is your funeral; here's a lunatic wants to know if you haven't got his telegram."

"See here, you ring-tailed snorter!" shouted the voice from the boat, "are you going to throw me a rope, or am I to stop here all night?"

"All right, sir," said the ship's officer pacifically, "we'll throw you a rope," and turned a lantern on to the boat below.

Heaped beside the two coolies rowing

there were a lot of small white-boarded packing-cases in the boat; and standing up in the middle of them a short, angry-faced, red-whiskered man.

"Pretty sort of treatment this," said the red-whiskered man; "didn't you get my telegram?"

"We're throwing you a rope, sir," said the ship's officer, and at this moment a deck-hand proceeded to do so. The first attempt hit one of the coolies and slipped out of his hand, while the red-whiskered man made some remarks in a foreign language which may have been offered in polite regret at his clumsiness. attempt was more successful; and presently, the boat having been taken to the ladder where it ought to have arrived, Mr. Sampson Jervoise stepped on deck. He was a short man, with a red face and an explosive manner, and in two or three minutes his renewed enquiries about his telegram, and his complaints about his reception, had gathered a number of the ship's company about him. He allowed himself to be placated, however, and gave directions for his packing-cases to be brought on He had telegraphed, he said, for board. a private deck cabin; and he was very much annoyed at hearing that the only vacant one had been appropriated to the Hon. Courtenay Blake. However, after a good deal of discussion, he was contented with a large double cabin on the main deck; and he gave orders that his packing-cases should all be stowed in the vacant berths of his cabin.

They were unaccountably heavy packingcases although they were so small. They were all stamped "Sampson Jervoise, Esq., Mining Expert, Passenger, Beira to London."

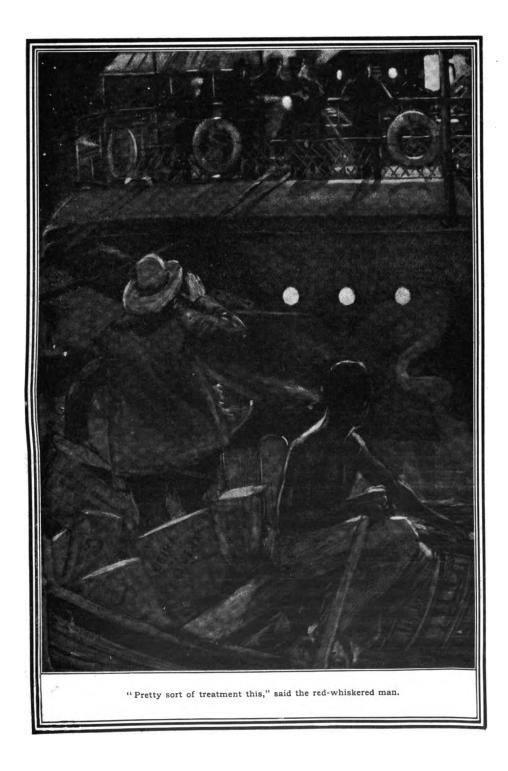
"They are my specimens," observed Jervoise briefly to the chief officer; and the specimens took the best part of an hour to get on board and to dispose properly. The operation quite broke up the evening's whist.

But next day and on the following days

Jervoise proved himself a much more genial travelling companion than the manner of his arrival could have led his fellow-passengers to expect. His exasperation of the previous evening had entirely disappeared, and he displayed an almost boisterous readiness to make friends with anybody, joined to a very genial habit of cementing the acquaintance in bottled beer. By the time the Hon. Courtenay Blake arrived there was hardly a soul in the ship with whom Jervoise was not on terms of warm bottled beer.

The only unexpected characteristic which he displayed, was a very positive disinclination to say anything about the packing-cases of specimens which had come on board with him. Several efforts were made to bring him round to them; but with very unsuccessful results. after a day or so his fellow-passengers finding that every allusion to them, direct or otherwise, produced in the genial little man considerable embarrassment, and generally reduced him to silence, began to respect his confidence and to question him no further. He had one interview with the captain, who went with him to the cabin which had been allotted to him, and remained there closeted with Jervoise for about half an hour. One of the passengers reported hearing the sound of hammering as he passed; and it was noticeable that thenceforward in the voyage Jervoise's door was always locked, and that, in spite of his geniality, he never invited anyone there to take a parting drink with him—as is the hospitable custom sometimes among those who go down to the sea in ships. Some perfunctory efforts were made to pump the captain, but there was nothing to be got out of him.

The Hon. Courtenay Blake's arrival—he was another two days late—and the immediate weighing of anchor rather dissipated the interest in Jervoise; but it was awakened a few days later in another form, by the attitude of the two men to one another. 'The Beira line is a new



line of small ships, and there were few passengers on board, so that in a three weeks' voyage it was inevitable that passengers, however diverse their tastes or stations, should fraternize; and even the great Mr. Blake, great politician and great company director, shareholder in the Beira Company, and the head of the great banking firm of Blake and Werner, was not proof against the magnetisation of enforced companionship. But he did not care for Jervoise in spite of Jervoise's open admiration and eager friendliness.

The little red-faced man made some rather pathetic attempts to get on terms with Mr. Blake; he deferred to him at dinner, and was clumsily familiar with him in the smoking-room; but the net result of these efforts was to call forth one or two snubs of such severity that the other fellow-passengers began to feel quite sorry for him as well as uncomfortable. However, the rebuffs did not impair Jervoise's boisterous expansiveness towards the other passengers, nor diminish apparently his humble admiration for them.

He continued his attentions to Mr. Blake, and at last, when the voyage was about ten days old, took a step in furtherance of them which surprised even his well-wishers.

Mr. Blake was fond of whist, and usually joined the whist tables set out on the after-deck or in the smoking-room after lunch or after dinner. Jervoise, on the contrary, had always declined to play—the fact was, he said, whist was hardly what you might call a game of his—and he usually occupied the time in hovering wistfully about the tables, glad of an opportunity to console a loser with the offer of bottled beer, and occasionally betting with unusually bad judgment on the result of a rubber.

But one day when the great man came up rather late after lunch, all the parties were made up, and with the exception of Jervoise, there were only two whist players standing out to make a rubber. While these two and Mr. Blake were debating whether it was worth while to play dummy, Jervoise unexpectedly volunteered to cut Mr. Blake, whether pleased or displeased at the suggestion, was too unacquainted with Jervoise's characteristics to be surprised, but the other two players, who had good ground for suspecting Jervoise's capabilities, exchanged a wink of amazement. It was a wink which was renewed when Mr. Blake and Jervoise cut together as partners; and it became accentuated when Jervoise, apparently out of a desire to please, proposed halfcrown points. Mr. Blake was a man whose millions did not make him any less keen on winning a few shillings.

The result possibly surpassed their expectations. Jervoise's whist was of the wildest description. His mistakes became more deplorable with his increasing anxiety, and his evident desire to propitiate his partner. The end came with the first rubber, which Jervoise brought to a triumphant close with a double revoke.

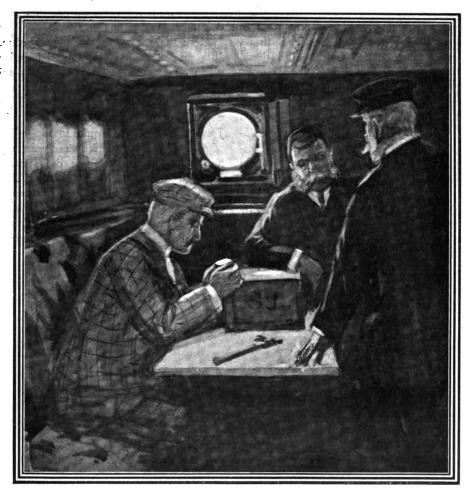
There was a somewhat oppressive silence as one of Jervoise's opponents packed up the cards, and marked up the points. Mr. Blake was silent, but his strong, deeply-marked face wore a heavy frown. Jervoise possibly felt called upon to say something to clear the air.

"You know, Mr. Blake," he began, with a rather anxious smile, "I play the oldfashioned game."

Jervoise's opponents glanced at Mr. Blake to see if his sense of humour would overpower his annoyance. But it did not.

"Well, I'd rather you played the fool with somebody else for a partner," he said, shortly, and got up and left the table.

Jervoise looked very crestfallen, and his chances of placating Mr. Blake appeared very slender now. But to the surprise of everybody—for the situation and the story soon became common property—he made an attempt that very afternoon, when Mr. Blake and the captain were walking to-



"What's the reef?" asked the financier.

gether on the bridge. Jervoise approached them and addressed a remark to one, or both, and to the amazement of those who happened to see the incident, the remark was followed by a short conversation; and presently the three, the captain, Blake, and Jervoise, all moved off to Jervoise's cabin.

The reason for this unexpected change of front nobody could make out at the time; and the subsequent approach to cordiality towards Jervoise on Mr. Blake's part puzzled everybody until the end of the voyage. The causes that produced it did not leak out until long afterwards,

when the captain of the *Hurst Castle* told them. What Jervoise actually did say was this:

"If you'll excuse me for the intrusion, Mr. Blake," he began; and the captain used to say afterwards that on this occasion Jervoise's usual hesitation of manner seemed to have disappeared. "I think I have something in my cabin which you would like to see. The captain has seen it."

Blake glanced enquiringly at the captain.

"Yes, I've seen it," said the captain; it's worth seeing."

"Will you both accompany me?" asked Jervoise politely; and the three went to his cabin. When they arrived there, Jervoise locked the door behind them. Then, without a word, and in a swift, business-like way he unlidded his specimen boxes. There in the dim light of the cabin, reposing unostentatiously in their little packing-cases, lay yellow shining ingots.

"Gold?" exclaimed Mr. Blake in startled interrogation.

"We've found it," said Jervoise, briefly lifting out one of the heavy bars and holding it out for inspection.

"Where?" asked the great man.

"Manicaland," returned Jervoise.
"We're the first to find it. It's consigned to the care of your bank, Mr. Blake; that's why I thought you would be interested."

"What's the reef?" asked the financier. "The Veldtschoon."

"Ah!" said Mr. Blake, meditatively, "the Veldtschoon and Vogelsang. The Veldtschoon Company. Ah! very interesting. I congratulate you, Mr. Jervoise. I'm much obliged to you."

"Oh, not at all," began Jervoise, and then stopped, looking rather uncomfortable. "Perhaps I ought not"—and then stopped again; and he began rather hurriedly to nail up his cases again, and unlocked the door. He seemed rather relieved to get rid of his visitors.

Nor, although the meaning of the visit to Jervoise's cabin, and its upshot, remained a mystery to the other passengers, did he seem to be eager to take advantage of Mr. Blake's improved attitude to him during the rest of the voyage? On the contrary, he seemed rather embarrassed by it; and so far from making any attempt to improve the acquaintance as he had hitherto striven to do, he appeared to avoid it. In some sense, indeed, the relative positions of the two men were reversed. There was, however, no other incident concerning the two of any

significance until the ship reached Madeira.

Here there was one day's quarantine. It was a restriction which caused Jervoise obvious uneasiness, and he made several attempts to be allowed to send a message ashore. The captain persisted that he could not. But what was impossible in Jervoise's case was not quite so impossible where the great Mr. Blake was concerned, and that astute gentleman did send a message ashore-twenty-four hours before that of Jervoise reached the telegraph It is more than possible that Jervoise had some inkling of the fact, for he did not exchange a word with Blake during the rest of the voyage, and being more successful in getting quickly ashore at Southampton, he got off to London with his packing-cases, without so much as wishing good-bye to the man whose acquaintance he had been at the first so keen to cultivate.

The message which the Hon. Mr. Blake contrived to send off Madeira was addressed to his manager, and was very brief. It ran, "Buy 2,000 Veldtschoon and Vogelsang." The bank manager raised his eyebrows and con-Then he glanced at the share list, on which "Veldtschoon" stood at 15, and telephoned to the bank's brokers to buy 2,500 Veldtschoon. "What's good enough for Mr. Blake is good enough for me," observed the manager to himself. There was some delay in getting an answer from the brokers, who explained that there was a difficulty in finding sellers of Veldtschoon; and the next morning when the manager looked at the share list, Veldtschoon had gone up from $1\frac{5}{8}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$. But that day the bank received another telegram manager which elucidated his employer's message, and which ran: "Messrs. Blake and Warner £90,000's worth of bullion consigned to you per steamer Hurst Castle, please make arrangements for receipt .--Jervoise, Veldtschoon and Vogelsang."

The manager read, and made up his mind. He bought 2,500 shares at $5\frac{1}{2}$; and he told it in confidence to one or two friends. By the time the Hon. Mr. Blake reached Southampton Veldtschoon stood at $29\frac{1}{4}$.

Mr. Blake did not hurry himself at Southampton. From his cabin he saw Jervoise go off, and he recognised in the people who met Jervoise's specimen cases at the dock two of the bank servants, and saw them take the precious goods in charge. He did not himself go straight to London; but took his letters and telegrams—one of which was from the bank, announcing the execution of his order—and went off to his country house in Hampshire. He had some motive in avoiding the enquiries of some of his friends about Veldtschoon.

The next day, however, he went up to town, and drove in a hansom to his bank.

The clerks all knew him; and he walked straight into the manager's private room. The manager was walking up and down as he entered. On the floor about him were some specimen cases, which Blake recognised.

"Good-morning, Defries," said he; "you got my cable?"

"I did," said the manager.

"And bought."

"Yes."

"At what figure?"

The manager did not reply, and Blake glanced curiously at him. The manager looked pale.

"Well, what's the matter?" said Blake sharply. "You've got the bullion all right, I suppose?"

"We've got this stuff," said the manager, waving his hand with a tragic gesture towards the specimen cases. "It's lead bars—gilded!"





PAVING OF HELL

ILLUSTRATED BY LOUIS GUNNIS.

"Great are the works that man does; much greater by far are those that he is going to do."—The Sayings of Proceastes the Philosopher.

"Hell is paved with good intentions."-Old Proverb.

NCE on a wet and gloomy day,
I (who at times affect
Preciseness and a natty way
I frequently neglect),

Stung by a spasm of zealous rage
To most Augean toil,
Began my shelves to disengage
Of years of littered spoil.

A pile of borrowed books I made, unread, to be returned; Unearthed a batch of bills, unpaid, and these I promptly burned, A smaller lot—and paid!—An act, a proof, of saving grace! I glowed with virtue at the fact and stowed them in my case;

The music of a motif grand
(At least it's opening bars)
Which would, I hoped, ring o'er the land
And lift me to the stars;
Some verses—once in mood sublime
I'd heard a warbling bird—
Poetic, quite! A missing rhyme
Had nipped them at the third;



A manuscript on "Mirabeau," and one on "Modern Art"—
"Returned with thanks"—and yet, you know they were extremely smart;
A parody in Kipling's way hid crumpled in a hat—
(A candid friend said Rudyard K. himself had written that);



Some novels and a book in blue—
I had reviewed them, but,
En passant I may hint, it's true
Their pages were uncut;
Some clippings from The Daily News,
So very apropos
For themes on which I'd striking views,
But what—I didn't know;

A heap of papers filled a niche, mere scribbled notes designed For tangled plots of novels, which I never could unwind;
A pile of letters sent to me from one—no matter who—
"And this," I thought remorsefully, "this, too, has fallen through";



Then others of a stronger kind,
Advice and counsel sage,
Reminding me that youth was blind
And must be ruled by age—
Old Wisdom's saws, as trite as true,
With all of which, indeed,
(Provided monthly cheques came too)
I heartily agreed;

Tags of immortal works begun and rags of royal schemes, Proud plans of sanguine twenty-one, and skeletons of dreams— A pile whose crest might reach the skies, a flimsy monument To bear the legend fit: Here Lies a man of Great Intent.

For hours I swept, consumed, and tore;
I cleared each chair and shelf:
Sharp stitches stung my sides; I swore
At all things but myself;
I cursed Heredity and Fate
And human nature weak—
Until at length my room was straight,
But very cold and bleak!

I seized a ruler and a J; I planned a scheme of work;

I vowed to toil till night was day, my tailor ne'er to shirk;

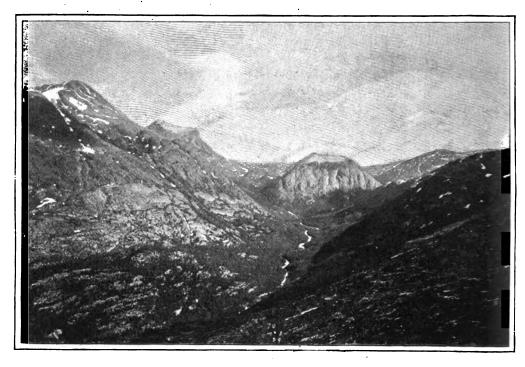
I cut and dried my time to think, to eat, sleep, breathe and all—

I ruled it neat with scarlet ink and nailed it to the wall!



And then—I took my pipe and weed—
Strange beings mortals are!—
And smoked, till Conscience floated, free,
Across the Golden Bar.

"'Tis wiser to let Fate alone,"
I gently sighed: "Ah well!
This day I've placed another stone
To pave the floor of Hell!"



Shkagway River above Porcupine Creek, White Pass Trail.

(Photograph by Mr. Jennings.)

HO, FOR THE KLONDIKE!

BY HAMLIN GARLAND.

THE VARIOUS WAYS IN.—WHERE THE GOLD IS FOUND AND HOW IT IS GOT.—WHAT NEW SETTLERS MAY HOPE FOR.

PART II.*

THE KAMLOOPS ROUTE.

AMLOOPS, the next town east of Ashcroft, is also advertising an overland route. As between Ashcroft and Kamloops, Ashcroft has the advantage of a good waggon road the entire distance of Quesnelle; but the people of Kamloops are actively engaged in opening a road which they claim runs through a better grass country. It passes up the North Thompson River, and crossing the divide, follows the Fraser River to Fort George, thence up

the Nechaco, striking the Ashcroft trail at the head waters of the Bulkley River. This road is not yet opened.

Cattle have been used for packing in this country to very good advantage. They are slower than horses, but carry about the same amount, and, if carefully used, will fatten on the road and sell readily to the butchers at the end of the journey. Horses could be sold at Glenora, probably, though this is a risk.

It is estimated that horses will cost

[&]quot; Continued from page 533.

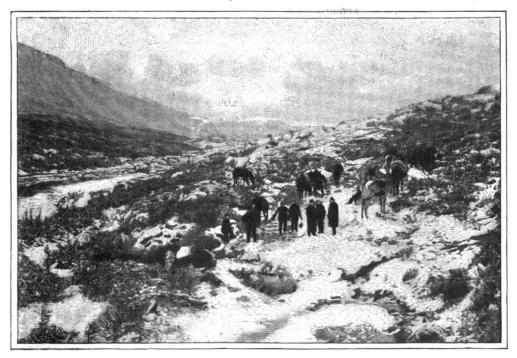
about six pounds at Ashcroft; and each man will require one saddle horse and two pack horses. He is then his own master, and expenses thereafter will be light. It is estimated that \mathcal{L}_{40} would enable a man to go through from Ashcroft to Teslin Lake, but no one should undertake the journey with less than \mathcal{L}_{100} in hand.

THE ST. MICHAELS ROUTE.

Of seaport routes there are six: one by way of St. Michaels, three by way of Lynn Canal, one by way of the Stikine River, and one by way of Taku Inlet. Of these, the longest, safest, and most leisurely is that by way of St. Michaels. It carries the miner by steamer from San Francisco, Portland, Tacoma, Seattle, or Victoria to the mouth of the Yukon, thence by river steamboat direct to Dawson City and other goldfields. The fare by this route ranges from £30 to £60, and includes

meals and berths, and the free transportation of 150 pounds of baggage. The excess baggage charge on a miner's outfit is about one shilling per pound. There are no hardships connected with this method of reaching Dawson City; but it is slow. It is more than 4,000 miles to Dawson from Seattle, and as the ice does not go out of the middle river until June, the miner will not be able to reach his mine before winter begins to return.

Lynn Canal is a long narrow arm of the sea which runs deep into the high mountains of the Alaskan coast, not far from the town of Juneau. It is in fact, a deep, narrow chasm or canon between the mountains, into which the Chilkat and the Chilkoot rivers empty. At this point the tide waters and the head waters of the Yukon are but twenty-five or thirty miles apart, and because of that fact three trails already lead across the divide. Lynn



Packing over the summit of the White Pass.

(Photograph by W. Ogilvie.)

Canal will undoubtedly be the best known entry-point on the Alaskan coast. Here is situated the town of Shkagway, which already contains 2,000 inhabitants and will be a city by the first of April. From here the Chilkoot Pass, White Pass, and Dalton trails severally make their start.

THE DALTON TRAIL.

The Dalton pack trail starts from the Chilkat arm of Lynn Canal, and strikes directly towards the Lewis River. My information regarding this trail is derived mainly from an interview with Mr. J. J. McArthur, Dominion Land Surveyor. In reply to my question, "How could I go on over that trail from Seattle, Vancouver, or Victoria?" Mr. McArthur said: "You should take ship for Lynn Canal and land at Haines Mission, which is on the Chilkat arm of Lynn Canal a little below Shkagway.*

"The trail, after leaving the mission, leads up the Chilkat River to the point where the Tlehini River comes in, then follows the Tlehini. The road is flat and gravelly to this point. The trail now begins to climb. It is an old Indian trail, but has been improved by Dalton. After reaching the upland, the trail enters upon a high and open country through which a waggon road is possible with very slight improvement, such as clearing out timber and grading some of the side hills. The trail at present climbs over the hills, to avoid the wet and soggy places.

"The highest point is 3,100 feet above the sea, and is covered with heather and bunch grass. By the middle of May feed is good. The trail crosses the Tlehini near its source, at a point called Rainy Hollow, where is considerable timber. This point is about fifty miles from tide water. You will still be on the seaward slope, but pretty close to the divide. There are several local divides to cross before you reach the inner watershed, but

they are not difficult to cross. You will hardly realise that you are crossing from one to the other. You will next come to Dalton's Post, which consists of a large trading store with an Indian village near by. After leaving Dalton's the country will continue to be open and easy of travel. You will ascend for a short distance until you pass the head waters of the Alsek and reach the watershed of the Yukon and Hootchi Lake.

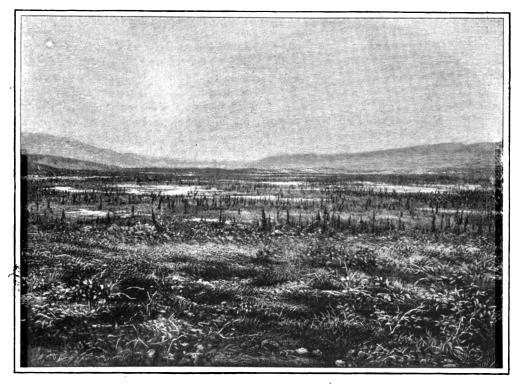
"It is impracticable to reach Fort Selkirk direct from this point. High, mossy, and rocky hills lie between. The ridges are covered with moss like a huge sponge right up to the summit, and underneath is broken rock, making it a very difficult country to traverse. The trail which you will follow is the old Indian trail; it bears to the north-east towards the Lewis River, which it attains at the mouth of the Nordenskiold, and keeping down Lewis River ends just below Rink Rapids. This half of the trail runs through wide, flat, grassy valleys, and the entire distance from Haines Mission is not more than 245 miles. Dalton has shortened it somewhat and improved it in places, but does not charge toll. The trail is open to any At Rink Rapids there is very considerable timber, some of it eighteen inches in diameter, so that lumber for boats will be plenty. It is probable that a town will spring up at the end of the Dalton trail, for it is sure to be a much travelled route.

"You cannot start on this trail before the 15th of May, but you should be on the spot a little earlier and have your horses and their packs at the head of tide water, which would save forty miles. The goods can go up by boat to the Tlehini. If you go in light, take a saddle horse and a couple of pack horses for each man You can reach Rink Rapids in ten or twelve days, travelling about twenty miles a day. In summer you may make possibly

As far as possible, the spelling of proper names adopted by the American Geographical Society is followed in this
article.

twenty-five miles per day. If feedingstations were established, one could go through at any time. There are fine hay lands all along this route, and there is no difficulty in the matter of feed after May 15th."

The intent of the Dalton trail, as well as of the Chilkoot and White Pass trails, is to land the miner in some one of the head Inlet, into which flows Dyea Inlet; and into Dyea Inlet flow the Shkagway and Dyea rivers. Up the Shkagway River runs the White Pass, or Shkagway, route; and up the Dyea River runs the Chilkoot Pass, or Dyea, route. The distance to Lake Lindeman is twenty-six miles by the Chilkoot Pass route, which starts at the town of Dyea, at the head of Dyea Inlet;



View looking west from the Dalton Trail, between Dalton's Post and Hootchi Lake.

(Photograph by Mr. Jennings.)

waters of the Yukon, in order that he may float down the current at his will. In each case there is a strip of American soil to cross and a high bleak mountain pass to climb. What is gained by easy grade is lost in distance.

CHILKOOT PASS AND WHITE PASS ROUTES.

Beside Chilkat Inlet, and on the east of it, at the head of Lynn Canal, is Chilkoot

and forty-six miles by the White Pass route, which starts at the town of Shkagway, a little lower down on Dyea Inlet. The two passes are not very widely different from each other in character, being "simply narrow, tortuous, ever-ascending gorges in the mountain-chain." They are shorter than any of the other passes. The routes to which they give name, though rugged, steep, and exposed to violent storms, are likely to be the most

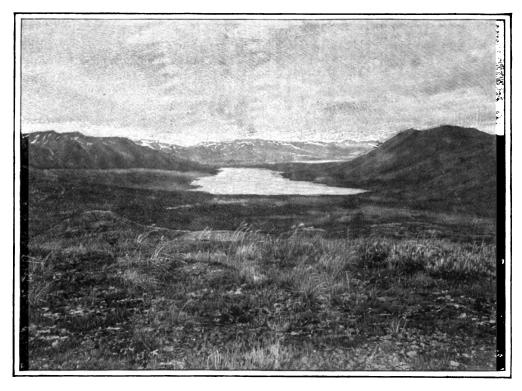
travelled and the most over-worked of all the routes to the Yukon. Everything that business enterprise can do to facilitate transportation is being done. At Shkagway they are building two large piers, in order that steamers may lie alongside even at low tide and discharge freight. A tramway and also a waggon road are building from the wharf at Shkagway to the summit of the White Pass, which is several hundred feet lower than the Chilkoot Pass. Bridges are being built and the trail improved. These improvements will be charged for, however. Toll will be collected for the use of the bridges, and during the rush freights will be high.

Dyea is also making a smart bid for traffic. A tramway is being built to the mouth of the cañon, and from there it is proposed to carry freight to the summit of Chilkoot Pass by means of an aërial cableway. This cable road is expected to transport 120 tons of freight daily.

By either of these two ways the traveller is landed at Lake Bennett by his packers and freighters, and thence he is supposed to be able to make his way down the Lewis River without further expense. If he takes one route he will wish he had taken the other, no doubt. The cost of getting an outfit from, say, Seattle or Victoria will be about two pounds per ton. The cost of getting it over the passes will range all the way from three to four shillings per pound. "If you go in before the middle of April and are strong and active, you may be able to take your outfit The trail is better when in on a sled. packed deep with snow than when bare and A party could 'double teams' in hauling hand-sleds, and in this way avoid a large part of the expense. But by neither of these ways is the journey as simple as it may seem. You take ship, for example, at Seattle, Tacoma, or Portland, for Shkagway. You pay, first of all, fare for yourself, freight charges for your supplies, horses, implements, whatever you have with you. Three or four days' sail takes you to the head of Dyea Inlet; but does not, by any means, land you at the trail. You are at Shkagway or Dyea, but without means of transportation unless you have brought horses with you. If you hire to have your goods transported, you are at the mercy of such freighters as have this matter in hand. If there is a great rush, which is likely, there may be very great delay in getting your goods carried even to the end of the waggon road. From the end of the waggon road your goods must be packed by sled, if there is snow; or upon the backs of men or horses, if the snow has melted; and the cost will be very great. If the trail should be crowded, as is likely to be the case, very great delay may be experienced in getting to the summit. Last autumn the trails were one long line of struggling men and horses, and the price of packing reached over four shillings per pound.

"Having reached Lake Lindeman at considerable cost and after much longer delay than you had anticipated, you will find yourself again helpless on the shore of the lake. A ferry charge will be met, and having reached the end of the lake and having crossed the portage to Lake Bennett, while you are done with packers, your troubles are not over. By the 1st of April there will be very little timber remaining out of which to construct rafts. If there are boats for freighting purposes, their owners will be masters of the situation. and there will be very considerable charges for transportation down the river. Unless you go in able to carry your own outfit with a 'knock-down' boat capable of floating supplies on both lake and river, you will be at the mercy of the transportation companies on either side of the summit."

Undoubtedly, with plenty of money, it will be possible to go from Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, or Victoria, to the head waters of the Yukon in shorter time by either the Chilkoot Pass or the White Pass than by any other route; but it must be understood



View on the Dalton Trail, south-west of Dalton's Post.

(Photograph by Mr. lennings.)

that it is not, and will not be, the poor man's route during the rush of March and April, and it will be attended by many hardships and killing hard work.

THE ALL-CANADIAN ROUTE.*

Very naturally the Canadian people desire to have it known that there is to be an all-Canadian route viâ the Stikine River. If you desire to go in by this way you will proceed to Victoria, Portland, Seattle, or Tacoma, by any convenient line of railway, and there take steamer to Wrangell, about three days' sail up the coast. From Wrangell you will be transported by river boats up the Stikine River to Glenora, a distance of 150 miles, which

will take several days longer. From Glenora, or from Telegraph Creek, which is a few miles beyond Glenora, you will be obliged to cross by pack to the head waters of Teslin Lake, which is connected by Teslin River with Lewis River, and so with the Yukon. This trail is about 175 miles long,† but it is comparatively easy, and will be shortened considerably as soon as spring opens. The journey across country by trail can be made as comfortably as any travel of the kind. There are no danger-The ground, both in the ous features. open and timbered district, is covered, to a depth of about two feet, with moss; but during the open season, between May and the middle of October, sufficient grass for

The information here given regarding this route is derived from a special report to the Dominion Government. For the priviles of using this report, I am indebted to the courtesy of the Hen. Clifford Sifton, Canadian Minister of the Interior.

[†] There are various estimates of the length of this trail; the one given above is efficial. The trail is to be much shortened.

200 or 300 animals can be obtained all along the route. It would not be practicable to travel over this trail before the 1st of May, as snow is likely to be on the ground in many places and the grass is not far enough advanced to meet the requirements of pack animals. There are no settlements on the route.

Teslin Lake opens about the middle of May, and closes about the 26th of October. Last year it was open till the middle of October, and there was no indication of its closing immediately. The slopes and benches along Teslin Lake are fairly timbered with a growth of spruce and black pine, the average size of this timber being about ten inches, and sufficient for scantling, flooring, and sheeting for house purposes and for boat-building. machinery for a saw-mill is now being transported across the portage from Telegraph Creek to Teslin Lake; the same company intend to place a steamboat on Teslin Lake and river on the opening of navigation, and skiffs, scow boats, &c., suitable for navigating the Yukon waters are to be kept for sale.

With proper roads or railway facilities from the Stikine to Teslin Lake, no better route could be found for getting into the Yukon country from the Pacific seaboard. The region about Teslin Lake, including the rivers flowing into it from the east, is considered very good prospecting country, and it is likely that the coming season will find a large number of miners engaged in that vicinity. Rich strikes have been reported from there quite recently; and Teslin Lake is likely to have "the call" next season. The Canadian Pacific Railway officials announce that the journey from Victoria to Telegraph Creek can be made comfortably in six days, and that several large new steamers have been put into service from Victoria. This route has two marked advantages: First, if the miner should outfit in Winnipeg, Victoria, or any other Canadian town, he will be able to go into the gold region without

paying duty, a saving of from fifteen to thirty-five per cent.; and, second, as soon as he passes Telegraph Creek he will be in the heart of a gold country, and can at once begin to prospect.

It is probable that stopping-places will be established along the route, so that a man can go in light at a considerable saving of time. This route and the Dalton trail will undoubtedly be the ones advocated by the Canadian Interior Department, and steps will be taken before the 1st of March to furnish means of transportation. It would be possible for the miner to send his outfit through to Glenora in bond without the payment of duties. Whether the difference in price between American towns and Canadian towns will offset any of these duties or not can only be determined by the purchaser on the ground.

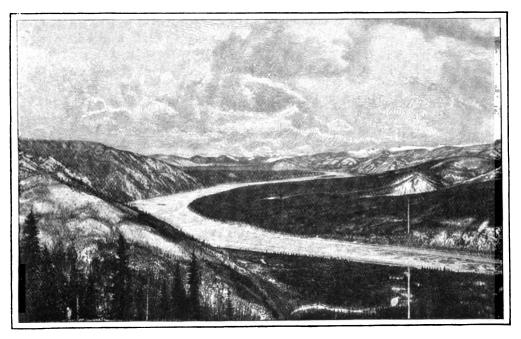
There is also a trail up the Taku River from Juneau, and overland to Teslin Lake, but this is not as yet thoroughly surveyed, and the bay at the mouth of Taku River at certain times is very dangerous by reason of fierce winds, lack of good anchorage, and floating ice from the enormous glacier which discharges into it. Another pass is just reported from Chilkoot Inlet; but every overland route from the sea to the Yukon must climb the steep, cold, and slippery heights of the Coast Range. They are all alike in general features. They are all difficult.

FINDING "PAY DIRT."

To find "pay dirt" has never been easy, and it will not be easy in the Yukon. Dr. Dawson, the head of the Canadian Geological Survey, has this to say on this point: "Rumours of big strikes will be thick, and are likely to be false. Even when the report is true, the tenderfoot, being without means of transportation and knowing nothing of the country, will reach the point of discovery only after every rod of pay dirt is staked, and he will find it extremely difficult even to buy

an interest in a claim, and will be forced to set forth on his journeys again to some other regions of discovery. My advice is: Scatter out; go into the creeks of the upper branches of the Yukon. It is of no value to go to the Klondike, to

stream, but your claim may extend back to the hills which bound in the valley. If you are fortunate enough to make the first discovery, you will be allowed to stake a second claim of 100 feet. You are then allowed sixty days in which to visit the



The Yukon at the boundary between Alaska and British Columbia. The white line at the right in the picture shows where the boundary runs.

(Photograph by Mr. Jennings.)

Indian River, or any of the creeks where discoveries were made last year. They have all been staked beyond pay dirt, both up and down from the point of discovery. Keep higher up, and prospect the small streams. This is my advice to the tenderfoot, which I do not expect anyone to follow."

THE WORK OF MINING.

Having been lucky enough to find colour in the gravel or sand, you will be required to stake out your claim at once, so that there can be no mistake with regard to boundaries. You may take a strip not more than 100 feet in width along the

nearest land office and make your entry. The cost of making this entry is fifteen dollars. Thereafter, if you leave your claim for seventy-two hours without permission of the Gold Commissioner, or without putting a man on it, you forfeit your right to work the claim. When you clean up, you will be required to pay a royalty upon all the gold you take outten per cent. of all returns up to £100 per week, and twenty per cent. on all returns over £ 100 per week. However, this will not trouble you until you have opened up your pay streak. These are the regulations at present. They are subject to change by the Dominion Interior Department,

Having made your claim, you can now begin the work of constructing your shelter, and here you should take time to buil I yourself a comfortable shanty. If you are fortunate enough to get located near timber, you will be able to construct very readily a log cabin, which when banked with snow in the winter will be You are now ready to begin the work of mining. Except in a few instances, the gold will be upon the creek The pay streak is seldom more than three feet in depth, and it lies under a layer of moss, ice, frozen muck, and gravel ranging from three to thirty feet in depth. If you start in summer to dig a hole to bed rock, the probabilities are that it will fill with water. But as soon as the ground is frozen sufficiently to enable you to prosecute your work without interference from the water, you sink a hole to the bed rock by means of a pick. If it is frozen too hard to dig, you build a fire on the gravel and heat the ground until it can be picked and shovelled, and after the layer of softened ground is taken out, you rebuild the fire. This requires a great deal of wood, and is slow work. In this way the pay dirt may be taken from underneath the surface in the winter. In May the sun comes rushing up from the south with astonishing heat. It softens the dump of pay dirt, and as soon as this can be shovelled into the sluice-boxes you begin washing.

OUTFITS.

The miner entering the remorseless country should go prepared for an encampment of six months or a year, and should consider that he is going into a daily war with hunger and cold, and that he is to be isolated, in all likelihood, from stores and goods of almost every sort, and especially from all delicacies and medical supplies. Every man going to the Klondike should be sober, strong, and healthy; he should be sound of lung and free from rheumatism and all tendency to liver or heart

diseases. He should be practical, able to adapt himself quickly to his surroundings.

The climatic extremes make it necessary to prepare for very cold and also for very warm and wet weather. The outfit of clothing should consist of comfortable woollen underwear and of very warm outer garments which can be laid aside at will. Above all, it will be necessary to take rainproof coats, tents, and waterproof boots. The miner works a large part of his time in snow or water. Bedding should be plentiful, and the sleeping-bag, such as is sold on the coast, will insure warmth at night.

If the prospector should decide to go in light, depending upon the trading points along the river for his supplies of flour, bacon, and sugar, he should carry in dried fruits and vegetables and other foods likely to prove preventive of scurvy, biliousness, and other diseases which arise from a monotonous diet. It is probable that bacon, flour, and other common necessaries will be in full supply by the 1st of July, though at a high price.

Any man who takes due thought concerning the dangers of the Yukon is exceedingly loth to advise another concerning the route by which to enter. It has been my aim here to present all the routes without bias. Each is advocated strenuously by the business men who will profit by the travel over it, and the statements of these must be taken with a due allowance. The Ashcroft "telegraph trail" seems to be the most feasible overland route. The Edmonton way is longer, runs through a colder country, and is less likely to be travelled. The Dalton trail has many advantages, provided one has means sufficient to purchase pack horses and cares to wait until the grass is grown sufficiently to feed his horse en route. The Chilkoot Pass and White Pass routes have been much written about, but the miner may safely depend upon finding them much more difficult than any published report describes them to be,

IN THE GREAT ADMIRAL'S DAYS.

BY CHARLES KENNETT BURROW.

ILLUSTRATED BY T. H. ROBINSON,

PART II.*

FTER this there followed days and weeks of quietness so far as the individual lives here spoken of were concerned. Frank Manton had disappeared, and no sign came from him. The current of my courtship swept into a deep and easy channel again. Esther seemed to have forgotten all about her fright and to be thinking only of Gabriel's return, and Howell was back with me, the occasion for his services seeming to have wholly passed.

But, while our private affairs moved thus smoothly, the whole country was on the stretch, like a tiger intent on his spring, with every sinew taut and claws unsheathed to strike. The pulses of the nation kept time like music, every man was eager for battle, even the women did not attempt to hold them back. news that our great Admiral, sick as he was, had left Merton and was again on board the Victory was like a tonic to our hearts: he could no more keep foot on land when Collingwood's message reached him than a hawk can forbear to swoop upon its prey. To know that he was once more at sea robbed even us, whose coast was so near to France, of what little fear we had. I think such a time can hardly come again to any nation; we who lived through it seem greater than our children in that one respect at least; it is a kind of glory to have breathed in England in those days.

The end of October came. It had been settled that I was to marry Mary Pendril on Christmas Day, and we were already full of preparations for our happi-

ness. I had not heard again from my cousin Gabriel, nor had Esther, and she was beginning to pine about it. I suppose the sight of Mary busy with her silks and linen made her tired of her single life, and, indeed, it must have been trying to the girl to see her friend, who was younger and had not been betrothed so long, nearer the climax of a woman's life than she. However, we comforted her as best we could, but I fear our own joy filled most of our sleeping and waking hours.

On the first day of November of that great year, just as my father and I had finished dining, a servant came in and said someone wished to see me. I went out, thinking it probably some messenger from Mary, and found a boy, cap in hand, waiting in the hall. He had evidently been running, for the sweat stood upon his face, which was all smeared with dirty fingers.

"Be you Mr. Nathaniel Scardale?" he asked. I told him that I was.

"He's come," he said.

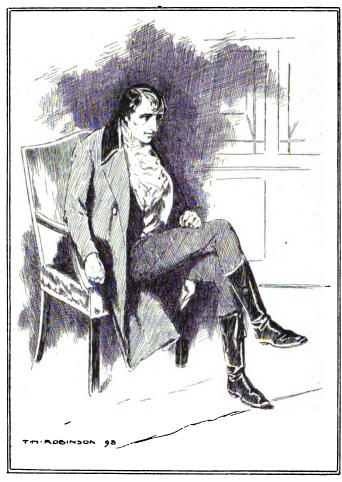
"What do you mean? Who's come?"
"Master Boyton," said he, "told me to say 'he's come,' and promised me sixpence."

"Then here's another for you," said I; "and tell Mr. Boyton I'll see him tonight." The little fellow ran off, and I heard his footsteps pattering down the hill.

There was no doubt as to the meaning of the message; Frank Manton was back in Hillbury,—and there was just as little doubt that he meant mischief. This renewal of danger, coming in the midst of my happiness, was like a warning bell striking into a wedding tune. I felt weak to meet his plots, I was not of the right stuff to countermine; if I could have

to me with his deeply lined red face ablaze with satisfaction.

"Within an hour, Mr. Scardale, I said, and I did it, too."



SAT FRANK MANTON CLOWERING INTO

met him fairly to fight it out I would have adventured my life cheerfully enough, but I had small stomach for groping in the dark. However, it was no season for delay, so I told my father of the message, and in an hour set out for Hillbury.

Boyton was waiting for me. He met me at some paces from his door and conducted me in cautiously, he himself going first to see that the way was clear. When I was safely in his room he turned "I thank you for the service," said I.
"Has he come alone or attended?"

"He stays here alone, but Hayes is in the town."

"The devil!" cried I. "Then I know where to find him if he's wanted. He will be with that cut-throat Owen Trale."

"Now how did you know that, sir?" Boyton asked, in obvious admiration.

"By using my eyes; how else? Has

this beautiful guest of yours any scheme on foot, think you?"

"Give me time, Mr. Scardale!" cried Boyton. "He's been in my house but three hours. But I can show him to you, if you'd care to see him."

"Without being seen, -yes," I said. He rose and bade me follow him. There was a door at the other side of the room which I had thought only that of a cupboard, but when Boyton opened it we entered a dark passage, at the end of which was a faint glow, as of lamplight through a curtain. We tiptoed noiselessly towards this, and my conductor drew the covering an inch aside, so that with one eye close to the pane I could see into another room. There was a clear fire burning on the hearth, and by it, with his face in profile, sat Frank Manton, glowering into the coals. He had always been what we call in our part a black man, but that night he looked blacker than ever, with his heavy brows bent, and his coarse, fleshy lips set in a kind of sneer habitual with him. I had not seen him at close quarters for some years, and there was a marked change. The grosser part of the man seemed to have flourished exceedingly, but in the very bend of his body I could see a degraded soul. There was an air of braggadocio about him that accorded ill with the name he bore, and when he turned his eyes in my direction, which he did at a noise without, there was a curious mingling in them of brutality, daring, and a kind of watchful fear. He gave me the impression that he would have liked to look all ways at once, with a sword-point in every direction, and a dagger up his sleeve. As I watched him I did not at all relish the idea of having to manage him alone.

Boyton drew me back when he thought I had looked long enough, and we quietly regained the other room.

"An innkeeper," said Boyton apologetically, "must keep an eye upon his guests."

"As I'm not one of your guests," I said, "I don't blame you. Such fellows as that need watching."

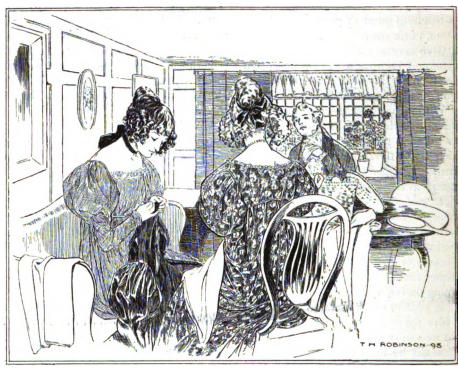
"And he shall be watched, sir, and made to pay the charges in the bill." He chuckled to himself and rubbed his hands together.

"Well," said I, "send me word again by that smart boy of yours if anything happens, or you suspect. I will see you again on Monday."

I walked home feeling more perturbed than ever after my nearer look at Frank; but there was nothing definite to go upon, his presence in Hillbury might betoken no danger to Esther. At the same time I devoutly wished my cousin Gabriel had been at home to guard her himself; it is an awkward matter to protect another man's sweetheart, particularly when your own is so closely bound to her. I said nothing of his reappearance to the girls, as I feared to alarm them again over a circumstance that might mean nothing, and I considered that Boyton was quite capable of attending to the work he had undertaken.

On Monday, which was the fourth day of the month, I saw Boyton again, but he had nothing to report beyond the fact that Frank was in constant personal communication with Owen Trale. Hayes had kept himself close, not having once been seen about the streets. I learned that Frank kept carefully indoors during the light hours, confining himself mainly to his bedchamber; his interviews with Trale were conducted at night and in Trale's house.

The afternoon of the fifth I spent with Esther and Mary. There was nothing to cloud my dear girl's happiness, and even Esther seemed to enter fully into her joy. At that time I was hardly more than a spectator; certainly my advice was sometimes asked upon some minor point or other, but I do not remember that it was ever taken. The pile of garments that Mary seemed to think it necessary to pre



THE PILLS
OF CARMENT
THAT MAN
SEEMED TO T
IT NECESSAN
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pare bewildered me; I could not conceive how she could find any use for them all, but I had sufficient wisdom to veil my ignorance in silence. I sat and watched her plying her needle in a kind of rapt contentment, and did not in the least resent the peals of laughter with which any suggestion I dared to make was received. I still said nothing of Frank Manton, nor can I blame myself now for this; the knowledge would hardly have prevented the event that was then so imminent.

At nine o'clock I went down to the George. The streets were crowded with mummers, it being Guy Fawkes night, and there was a great hubbub and the flare of torches; but the folks were quieter than usual, I suppose because so many of them had sons or brothers at the wars. The inn was full of merry-makers, and I had to wait in Boyton's private room until the place was closed before I could get word with him.

First we had a bottle together and drank

the King's health; then Boyton proposed that we should cool ourselves in the fresh air. I consented to this gladly, because I saw he had been drinking pretty deeply. He was not drunk; I should think he was too seasoned for that, but his speech was a little thick and his eyes bloodshot. I left the direction we should take to him, and he turned down towards the quays that lie along the river bank.

"That fellow," said he, "who calls himself Hugh Bonser, which I know to be a lie, has some game in hand." I asked him why he thought the name a false one.

"Because I'm not a fool," he said. "I told you I'd seen his face before, and now I can put a name to it, and that name is Manton."

"You are quite right," I said; "and the more the pity."

"Well, he's the only bad one of the lot, I'll swear that. . . . As I was saying, he has some game in hand."

"What is it?"

"Ah, there you beat me. There's a deal

of running to and fro and watching. My notion is we're not the only people who have an eye on our pretty gentleman."

"So much the better," I said.

"Yes and no to that," he answered. "You see, sir, I don't know the rights of it, and why you fear him."

"I'll tell you all I know," I said, "for we must pull together." And I briefly gave him all the facts I had. The confidence appeared to please him mightily, for he grasped my hand and swore to be secret and faithful.

By this time we were standing on the quay, above which, to the left, rose a sloping, ragged wall of rock to the height of sixty feet or more. Some of the houses above were built with their backs flush with this wall, so that they had a sheer drop to the waterside. In that misty November moonlight the height seemed sensibly increased.

Boyton laid his hand upon my arm and pointed upwards. "Do you see that light, Mr. Scardale?" he asked. I followed the direction of his hand and saw a broad blade of light that thrust into the mist like a sword.

"In that room," he said, "I wager he's sitting at this moment, hatching some damned plot."

"But is that Owen Trale's house?" I asked.

two, and that's the safest. The other fronts on the street, and there's a narrow passage between the two. 'Tis such fellows as he," he added, "who bring disgrace on an honest calling." I understood the calling he alluded to to be smuggling.

I stood gazing up at the light, wishing myself within earshot of what might be going on in that room, and feeling my fears return hard upon me, when the touch of Boyton's hand was again upon my arm.

"An active young man," he said, "with a sure foot, sir, could climb up there and see what was happening for himself." The same idea had just slipped into my mind, but at that hour of the night, with a touch of frost and so faint a light to guide me, it seemed a deadly enterprise.

"When I was a lad," Boyton continued,
"I'd have done it any day for a crown;
and I'd do it now if my weight were less
and I had no wife and children."

I continued to look up without speaking, and the more I looked the more that blade of light drew me. I knew that if any danger had threatened Mary I would not have hesitated, and as Gabriel had made me guardian of his Esther my duty seemed plain. In daylight the matter would have been less difficult, but under such conditions as were about us then the risk could not be disguised. At last I made up my mind.

"I'll go," I said. Byton answered nothing, but he shook hands with me again.

I took of my coat, which might have hampered me, and handed it to my companion, and a moment later, after clambering over some loose timber that lay round, I stood at the base of the cliff. I chose a spot some yards to the left of the light, that I might work diagonally to it, and, commending Mary and myself to Heaven, began the ascent.

For the first thirty feet it was comparatively easy and the foothold sure, but beyond that the difficulty increased. People must have thrown their refuse from the windows above, for there were ledges so slippery that every time I trusted my weight to them my heart was in my mouth; here and there, also, a plane of rock was glazed with ice, and I had to search with one numb hand in the dark ness for something to rest my fingers on. Once my foot slipped, and I hung for a moment by the fingers till I felt the nails break; that was the worst of all, and I counted myself a dead man. But I regained my foothold as by a miracle and struggled on.

How long it took me I know not, but

at last I was aware of the light just above my head. To my delight I found a narrow, level platform below the window, evidently made to place flower-pots on in summer, for it was covered with powdered There I lay for some minutes to regain my spent breath, feeling as sore all over as though I had been beaten. Below me I could see the dark quay, and the silver, misty line of the river, while beyond the marsh stretched cold and grey. I think I never loved my native Churchsea so much as at that moment when I was nearer to never seeing it again than I had ever been before. The thought of my father sitting quietly in his study brought the tears into my eyes; but at that weakness I lifted my head suddenly to the level of the window and looked in.

There was no more than three inches between the bottom of the blind and the wood of the casement, but that was enough for me. The sight that met my eyes, to an ordinary observer, would have suggested nothing unusual, but to me it had the most sinister aspect, and fully justified my perilous climb. I forgot alike my aching hands and body and the danger of the return passage in my efforts to see and hear.

All three were there, Frank Manton, and Hayes, and Owen Trale, sitting about a round table, on which a lamp stood, together with bottles and glasses. Each man had money before him, and they were playing for high stakes, to judge by the preponderance of gold. Hayes had his back partly towards me, and the light, shining through his thin hair, had something of the effect of a halo. Frank was on his left, Trale on his right; the latter was plainly drunk, and Frank not much better, which might have accounted for the fact that Hayes' pile was much the largest of the three, had I not distinctly seen him mark a card. When he won the round, Frank half-filled a glass with neat spirit and drank it off with an oath.

"The cards are all against me," I heard

him say. "I don't mind the money, it's the infernal luck. It makes me sick for our business of to-morrow night."

"Tut, tut, Mr. Bonser," said Hayes, "'tis I win, and I'm in to-morrow's work as well."

"The affair is mine, not yours," cried Frank angrily. "The devil take your luck and you too!"

"Don't be angry, Mr. Bonser; let us play another round, and if I win again the other goes as well."

"What the devil do you want the other for, you old rip? With two on our hands we double the risk."

"I'm a man, sir," said Hayes, "as well as you, and I want my revenge. If the two don't go I cry off, and there's an end."

You may be sure this talk made my ears burn and my stomach sink, for to my ancy "the other" could only mean Mary, and "the two" both the girls. In my anxiety to see how the next round went, which at that moment they began to play, I thrust so close to the window that my face touched it; but they were too intent upon the game to take their eyes from the table. Hayes won again, but Frank that time was on the watch, and instead of pushing over his stake he flung the cards in the old ruffian's face.

"You cheat!" he effed, and rose heavily to his feet. Hayes sat perfectly still, like a man suddenly paralysed with fear, and then, as Frank made a threatening motion towards him, he bowed his head forward on the table and wept! I could stand no more of it, I had heard quite enough; as I began my descent I could hear Frank's brutal laugh, and it seemed to follow me all down the face of the cliff.

How I reached the ground I never knew; my safety certainly had little to do with any prudence of my own; I do not remember to have had a single conscious thought until I stood again upon the quay. I found Boyton pacing up and down there, blowing into his

hands to warm them; as for me, I was one glow from head to foot.

"Well, Mr. Scardale," he said.

"You were right to send me there; he has some plot on for to-morrow night." I told him what I had seen and heard, and he seemed delighted that things had at last come to a head. He made light of the danger to the ladies. He would have the man so watched, he said, that nothing could happen without his knowledge, and he further undertook to send me word directly he discovered what the Even at that time he must plot was. have had a very shrewd idea of it, and, indeed, he told me later that he saw it all in a flash. I never knew a man so keen as Boyton to be revenged upon a guest who had criticised his wine and condemned his bill.

We parted at the Hillbury end of the White Road. The cold made my broken nails ache horribly, and by the time I reached the hill that rises steeply from the plain into Churchsea, my limbs cried out for rest. But the surprises of that night were by no means ended, and I was not to find sleep until dawn.

I was astonished as I approached the house to see it all lighted up, but I was much too weary to trouble myself with conjectures. I met my man Howell crossing the hall as I entered, and I asked him what it meant.

"Mr. Gabriel Manton has come back, sir," he said.

I threw down my hat, hardly knowing whether to be the more afraid or glad, and ran into the dining-room as I was. There sat Gabriel at the end of the table, and my father at the top.

"Gabe!" I cried, nearly overturning a chair in my haste to reach him.

"Nat!" he answered, with his handsome tanned face all shining. Directly he rose I understood why he had come home; his right arm was bandaged and carried in a sling. He grasped my shoulder firmly with his left hand, and turned me round slowly.

"Where in heaven's name have you been, Nat? You're as torn and dirty as though you'd been in action. Blood, too," he added, holding my right hand, from under the finger-nails of which some blood had oozed and hardened.

"I've been chasing a privateer," said I, "and his name is Frank Manton; and if you want to hear about it, give me something to wet my throat."

"The devil!" he muttered under his breath, and filled a glass for me, which I emptied at a gulp. "Well done, Nat!" he said, as he filled it again.

"Before I begin," said I, "what are you doing here, and why is that good fighting arm tied up?"

"I'm here," he answered, "because of the arm. It was splintered by a falling spar (if a shot had done it I wouldn't have minded) and disabled men are no good to Nelson, who's now with Collingwood, and God bless them for a pair of noble gentlemen."

"Amen," said my father, and we all drank again.

"I came to Dover in a merchant ship that ran across us outside Cadiz. Ten of her men volunteered for service, and the captain, like an honest man, let them go and brought back ten of our sick. That's why I'm here, Nat, and let me squeeze that hand of yours again."

I found that my father had told Gabe nearly all that had happened since his letter reached me, so all I had to do was to explain how I came to be in such a sorry plight. He listened to the end, only swearing softly at intervals, and then lay back in his chair and drummed upon the table with his left hand.

"It looks like kidnapping," he said.

"It does," said I; "the very thing."

"But we'll lay the rascal flat yet, ay, and trounce him as though he were a Frenchman or a Spaniard."

"I trust so," said my father, and there

was a very meaning smile upon his face that I did not at that time understand.

"Are you sure of Boyton?" Gabriel asked.

"As sure as of you or of myself."

"That's well," he said, and swung his chair round to the fire and stretched out his long legs towards the blaze.

"Hadn't you young men better go to bed?" my father asked.

"To bed, sir!" cried Gabe. "Bed! Why, we have a three hours' talk before us, and another bottle or two to crack. Don't speak of bed to a sailor his first night on land, sir; though I'm not much good now," he added, looking savagely at his useless arm.

"I suppose," said my father, "you want to talk about your women-kind, and an old man's not needed to help in that song, so I'll say good-night." He kissed us both tenderly, a thing not usual with him, and, taking his candle, went off quietly to bed.

"That's a good man," said Gabriel, "if ever there was one."

"I'm glad you think so," said I; "and I'm proud to know it's true."

"Now, Nat," he said, stretching his whole arm upwards and then bringing it down to support his head, "tell me about Esther, man."

So I told him all I knew, and painted her and her love for him in the most beautiful colours I could command, until his face glowed in the firelight red as the sun through a misty winter evening. And, indeed, I told him nothing but the truth, but behind it all I seemed to hear the voice of Mary prompting me, and it was really my great love for her that made me eloquent about Esther. Yes, Esther was well enough, no doubt, and to Gabriel always perfect, but my Mary was ever the queen of women.

And then, of course, we had to go over the old days together, and talk about the girls when their frocks reached no farther than their knees; and we said

how wonderful it was that we should have come to love them, which was not wonderful at all, but the most natural thing in the world; and we talked also of our boyish sailings round the coast of Sussex, and the narrow escapes we had had, which first gave Gabriel a taste for the sea and me my home staying passion for Churchsea and all about it. We did not say much of the morrow (or rather of that day, for already the dawn glimmered) because we both felt it was useless to make projects on such uncertain evidence as we had. On one thing, however, we were resolved, and that was that when the night came the girls should not be alone.

It was six o'clock in the morning when we separated for rest, and it was that same hour on the evening of the sixth of November that I awoke. I could not at first understand the lack of light, but when I realised that the sun-glow was in the west, I dressed hurriedly and ran to my cousin's room. He, also, was just awake, and you may imagine it was in a shame-faced manner that we greeted one another. When I rated Howell for not calling me, he said that my father, who had been abroad since morning, had given strict orders that we were not to be disturbed. I was grateful for his kindness, but was in no mood to think it wise.

No message, however, had come from Boyton, so we breakfasted at that unearthly hour without any serious misgivings; when we had finished it was quite dark.

As we were preparing to go out, a hurried knock came to the door, and I opened it to find Boyton's boy panting on the threshold. He thrust a letter into my hand, which Gabriel read over my shoulder. It ran thus:—

"Respected sir, —Mr. Bonser, or Manton, has ordered a carriage and *four* for nine o'clock. I believe that carriage will contain *ladies*, sir. He will tell my men to

drive to London, but they will not go to London. If you are on the White Road at half-past nine, you will meet the carriage; if that is not convenient to you it shall be driven to your door. The gentleman paid my bill to-day without any grumbling, and I was to keep my mouth shut, which I have done, sir, as you will bear me out, this being a letter. That fifty pound will be for the watching, sir. Wishing you good sport, and with best respects, I remain, your obedient, humble servant, Thos. Boyton."

When we came to the end of this extraordinary communication we looked into each other's face and laughed aloud. I thought Gabriel would have kissed the boy who brought the letter, but he gave him a gold piece instead, which sent the little fellow flying down the road as though a bull were after him.

"I wish," said I, "that this had come before. 'Tis too late now to stop the kidnapping, if that's what it means, and the girls will be scared to death."

"Poor things," Gabriel said; and then he roared again and said they would not hurt, and that my innkeeper was a jewel. But I did not feel so easy in my mind, for I believed Frank Manton to be desperate, and I knew Esther would have no strength to fight. The mere thought that the blackguard Hayes might lay his hands on Mary made the blood smart in my fingertips:

It was nine o'clock when my cousin and I took our swords and went forth. It was a clear night, with a good moon and a tang of frost in the air; the shadows of trees and houses lay black and still. Most of the good Churchsea folk were already in bed, and hardly a light glimmered; it was so quiet that there seemed a conscious sense of waiting in the air. We hardly spoke as we descended to the White Road. Once I asked Gabriel whether he had his pistols, as a sword would be of little use in his left hand; to which he

answered that he had them ready, and would make shift to use his sword as well if need were. I could see he anticipated an easy capture; but I was not so sure.

Half-way between the towns we paused, and stationed ourselves on the right side of the road under the shelter of some wil. lows. When we spoke at all it was in whispers, but soon we were listening too intently even for that. A constant, low murmur was in our ears, the calling of the sea behind us; leaves fell about us with a sound like the patter of a dog's footsteps; from time to time came the bleating and soft stir of sheep on the marsh. Those minutes of waiting seemed endless; I breathed deeply, as though to take my good native air into my confidence; I warmed my sword-hilt with my hand, and turned back the sleeve of my sword-arm; I made sure that my pistols were free. As for Gabriel he stood as still as a rock, but doubtless. inwardly cursing the spar that had disabled him.

At last, he touched my arm and whispered, "There they are; do you hear?" I heard well enough, first a faint rumble, and then the rapid beat of hooves and the grind of wheels. The pace was great, for the sound grew upon us with such speed that we were barely ready when the carriage loomed before us at the end of a straight stretch of road. At that point we heard a voice roar:

"Stop, you rascal, this is not the way. Stop, I say!" But Boyton's postilion knew his master's orders and drove on.

"That's my dear cousin's voice," said Gabriel.

We stepped into the middle of the road and threw up our hands. The pace slacked instantly, and we were hardly at the right hand door of the carriage before Frank had stepped out on the other side. This was the best thing that could have happened for us; a glance told us that there were women inside, and in a moment we had them out, and Hayes as well. He was so astonished that there was not time

to call up such courage as he had; Gabriel swung him round by the collar, and dealt him such a kick as gave me joy to hear. It sent him flying into the ditch, where the old rogue lay whimpering.

I left my cousin to see to Esther, who seemed half dead with fright, and turned to Mary. She was gagged, poor child; I freed her with an oath unfit for ladies' ears, and for a few brief seconds she lay in my arms, her lips warm against mine, and the words, "my love," breathed from a bursting heart. Happiness and rage were so mingled in me that I could not speak. It was she who first saw danger; she drew away from me quickly, and whispered, "Nat, defend yourself."

I then noticed that the altercation between Mantonand the postilion had ceased. I fell back a step to Gabriel's side, who was supporting Esther on the road, and faced Manton; Mary stood behind.

"What the hell's all this?" he cried.

"What, indeed!" said I.

"Cousin Frank," called Gabriel, "I always thought the family honour would be soiled by you, and, by God, you've done it!"

"You!" cried Frank. He hesitated for a moment, and then, seeing Gabe's wounded arm, the brute drew suddenly and made a vicious lunge at it. I struck up his point just in time; as it was it grazed my cousin's shoulder. Frank turned fiercely upon me, and in a moment we had engaged.

We both knew our business, but he had the advantage, as the chaise lamp was at his back; this dazzled me while it gave him a good mark. I tried to draw him away into the moonlight, but he was too wary for that.

"Tom," I cried to the postilion, "drive on a step."

"If you do——" Manton cried, parrying a thrust; but before the sentence was finished the carriage had moved, and we fought on equal terms. This must have lasted five minutes when I was aware that

the group had increased; we were, indeed, Frank must have fighting in a ring. noticed this at the same time, for his attack became so furious that I had to fall back a step. The man must have been mad with rage and cruelty, for he made a sudden pass at Mary, thinking, I suppose, to reach me through her. I caught it on an up-guard, the blade slid over my hilt, and my point pierced his throat on the left side. His weapon dropped, and he staggered back into the arms of one of our unknown spectators.

I turned to Mary, who had never flinched; I was so hot with that strange human love of battle that I cannot tell whether my joy was greater to feel her weight against my bosom or to see my enemy's blood smoke upon my sword. Gabriel had just disarmed Hayes, who had got upon his belly and was making a mark of him. He dragged the creature within the ring and pushed him towards his new master, whose service had been, I was glad to find, so hard.

Frank's wound was more ugly than serious, his windpipe having escaped; but the flowing blood was not a pretty sight for women. The man who supported him bound it up, and then a King's officer stepped into the midst of the group. At that moment I observed my father in the background with a look of great pride and satisfaction on his face. The officer laid his hand on Manton's shoulder, saying:

"Frank Manton, alias Hugh Bonser, alias the Chevalier de Bryères, I arrest you in the King's name as a spy in the pay of the French." Someone laughed, I think it was the postilion.

"Your warrant," Frank said, with his hand upon his wound. It was handed to him and he glanced it over by the light of the chaise lamp, which the grinning postilion obligingly brought for him. When he handed it back he was as pale as death.



3 K

"Very well," he said. "I am your prisoner."

"You may be pleased to know," said the officer, "that we want Hayes here as an accomplice, and that Owen Trale is already under arrest."

We all drew a breath of relief at this, and I began to feel a little sorry for my late adversary, whose life was like to come to such an unhappy end. But there was no time for pity; it was cold and the girls were not dressed for travelling.

"This carriage, sir," said Gabriel, "is at your service for the conveyance of your prisoners." The officer thanked him, but declined, saying he had a foot escort which would see them back to Hillbury. There being nothing else to do, I had a word with my father, telling him we would see the ladies home and remain that night at the George.

"You see," he said, "that my suspicions were correct. This is my doing."
"You are always right," I said, and wrung his hand.

The chaise was turned about and Gabriel and I entered it, with our sweethearts by our sides. The last thing I heard as we drove away from that strange company was the voice of the rascal Hayes, raised in piteous weeping.

It is difficult, in looking back, to say what have been the crowning seasons of our lives; but that drive back to Hillbury was certainly one of mine. To know that my love was safe and whole, to hold her hand and know that it was mine for ever, to kiss her eyes and know that they both slept and waked for me, these were joys unspeakable. I did not dare to think from what she had been rescued; once in London, God knows what might have come The meanness of Hayes' attempted revenge for my having found him out appalled me; I had not thought a man of his years could sink so low. When we found time to look at our companions they seemed as happy as ourselves. Esther was a maiden born always

to have a strong man by her side, and there he sat, with his arm about her.

After bestowing the girls safely at Esther's home and taking a long goodnight, we made our way to the George, where we had to tell every detail of our adventure to Boyton, who punctuated it with roars of laughter and great slappings upon his thigh. It appeared he knew all about the proposed arrest, but had arranged things like a theatre manager so that the climax should come upon the White Road; because, he said, he wanted me to see a little fighting before I died-Frank Manton's method of capturing the girls had been ingenious and most success-He knew the room in which they sat at night, and all at once there had come a great crying and groaning below the window, as of someone in mortal agony. They had rushed out to see what it was, been caught and gagged with the assistance of Owen Trale, and carried to the carriage in waiting at the bottom of the street. The howling was probably made by Hayes, who was capable of doing it very well.

We sat up till late, drinking some of the finest claret I ever set my lips to; I dare say it had a history, but Boyton said nothing about that. I was put to rest in the very room occupied the night before by Frank Manton, a piece of irony on Boyton's part that I did not altogether relish; but I opened the window and found I could breathe freely, and so slept well.

At eleven o'clock the next morning, it being the seventh of November, we were surprised by a great shouting and rushing to and fro in the streets. We hurried out, and saw an eager crowd gathered about the Town Hall. A smoking horse, with bent head and bloody foam about his nostrils, his sides all raw with spurring, was being led away; a hundred hands patted the poor brute as he passed. We pushed into the concourse and found a notice posted on the door of the Town Hall, and that notice set forth that on the

twenty-first day of October of that glorious year Lord Nelson had utterly defeated the French and Spanish fleets off Cape Trafalgar, but, alas! he himself was slain. We uncovered our heads, and I saw the tears heavy in my cousin Gabriel's eyes.

"My God!" he said, "to think I was not there!"

I took his arm and led him away. The town was in a turmoil, strong men laughed and wept, the church bells sent forth such a peal that I thought the tower must have tumbled about the ringers' heads; and as at last we turned our faces towards Churchsea, the Hillbury brass band

marched out and blew such music as they had never played before. I say again, it was a glorious time, and to have lived in those days is an honour to any Englishman.

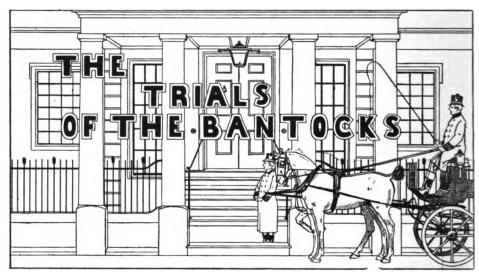
When we reached home we found that the news had gone before us. My father was engaged in unpacking his silver.

"Dear lads," he said, "all's safe now; but ah, what sorrow that our great Admiral is dead!"

Gabriel threw himself into a chair and hid his face.

"My God," he said again, "to think I was not there!"





BY G. S. STREET.

ILLUSTRATED BY MALCOLM PATTERSON.

III.—THE ORDEAL OF RUSSELL BANTOCK.

KNOW no more respectable young man, no one more absolutely correct in every relation of life, than Russell Bantock, Mr. and Mrs. Bantock's eldest son. Even at school this distinction of perfect propriety belonged to him. He was not in the cricket or the football eleven, nor was he even in the sixth, but he attained to the average in both spheres necessary to the respect of masters and boys, and was never in anything approaching a row. His friends were among the most eminent boys of our time; but eminence in school life was not by itself If a boy was a passport to his intimacy. a hero in the field, or a distinguished member of the sixth, Russell Bantock was always affable to him and counted him among his friends, but he was never really intimate with him unless he were assured that the boy's social position "at home," as we said, was quite what was to be wished. He sometimes made mistakesas who of us does not ?--but he always did his best to remedy them. I well remember the tact and firmness with which he gradually cooled towards a boy whom he had believed to be the son of a Member of the existing Cabinet, but whose father he subsequently discovered was a mere literary hack who did not even belong to a good club. The boy's casual mention of Brixton as his home and a subsequent consultation of a Court guide, found on our house-master's study-table, had opened Russell's eyes to the true state of the

It may be supposed from what I have said that I wish to imply too great an importance for myself, since Russell Bantock invited me to stay with him in the holidays. That is not the case; I am sure it was only a fortunate accident that procured me the honour which was to bring with it so many agreeable consequences. It happened at the time I was invited that Russell was preparing for his matriculation at Oxford, and as I was two forms higher up in the school and accounted a fair scholar, I was able to be of use in reading with him. I refer (in modesty) my frequent intercourse with the Bantocks to the same cause, in the case of Russell's subsequent examinations at Oxford and those of his younger brother. Mrs. Bantock has assured me

that she considers me quite a valuable friend of the family, and I am more than repaid by this gracious acknowledgment for any little exertions I may have undergone. I may also mention (again in modesty and not to boast) that she has been so kind as too employ me as a sort of informal secretary in the clerical work

(for which, of course, she has no time) consequent on her position in the charitable world.

But to return to a more important subject than my own accidental merit. At Oxford, Russell Bantock's correctness was even more admirable than at school, and was attended with even greater success. From the very first he was extremely exclusive. This was perhaps rather a bold step to take, but like most bold



At that moment Lord X, came up.

steps, firmly and consistently made, it succeeded. He rapidly became a member of the very best clubs in his college, "the House," and in the University at large. The more general life of the place, which would have brought him into contact with unselected people, he did not affect. For example, "the Union" was not in our time a fashionable resort; I believe that to the end of his time at Oxford, Russell professed that he did not know where it

was. He did not care much for games, but he was known to hunt occasionally, and so escaped the odium which men who "didn't do anything" incurred; he succeeded, like his father before him, in taking a pass degree. He was never known to boast of his money; on the contrary, he was in the habit, like his

father, of confessing its limits. "I'm really not a rich man," he used to say; "my governor only allows me seven hundred a vear." His lunches were excellent, but he always (and especially after his first year, and when his position was thoroughly well established) was careful to avoid lavishness.

When he left Oxford, Russell was called to the Bar, not intending to practice, but because he thought it was

due to him to be a member of a learned profession. He then went into the Bank, and was made a junior partner almost at once. I know no young man about town who leads a more careful life. He rides every day before breakfast; he plays billiards or pool in preference to cards because the former games involve a certain amount of exercise; he dances sometimes in the season (though only at very good houses),

but otherwise never stays up late or commits any kind of excess, except on Saturday nights, Sunday being a day of His private income is at present only two thousand a year, and in his opinion that is an insufficient sum on which, in his position, to marry; in a few years it will be considerably increased, and then, I believe, he will add his influence to the institution of matrimony; in fact, I know that he has already fixed on his future house, though not yet on the In this matter he is wisely careful not to commit himself, being aware that in the course of a few years his inclinations might change—unless, indeed, a peculiarly desirable person (in point of rank or money) were to be attainable, in which case he has told me in confidence that he might hurry matters to an earlier issue. I need hardly say that he belongs to two irreproachable clubs. He has little time for literary cultivation, but keeps up an acquaintance with contemporary letters by reading the reviews of new books in The Times, and he has told me that he would be quite charmed to meet a few of the betterknown writers of the period, simply as writers, and not counting those whose social position would make them in any case people one likes to know. In fact, Russell is an accomplished and admirable example of English young manhood: he is businesslike and far-seeing, and, not disdaining the amusements natural to his years, he pursues them with unvarying discretion. His principles are simply beyond criticism.

Up to a few years ago, however, I had never seen Russell Bantock put to stern proof in the war with circumstance. It happened at last, and since then I have estimated his occasional friendship at its right value. It was on a Sunday morning in June. I was due to lunch with the Bantocks that day, and as I walked up St. James's Street I saw Russell on the steps of his club. I saw at once that something had happened. He explained in a few words; it was, indeed, a

thing to try the strongest patience. that year (I must premise) many men wore short black jackets with tall hats, but, of course, it was possible to wear bowler hats with these jackets as an alternative. Well, it seemed that some culpably careless member of Russell's club had gone in there with a bowler hat (pot hats they are also called), and on going out had taken Russell's tall hat, leaving his pot hat behind him. Now, Russell was wearing a frock-coat. You see the tragedy at once. No one knew whither the evil-doer was gone; in fact, no one was certain who it was. Russell could not deliberately take another member's tall hat. But it was impossible that he could wear a pot hat with a frock-coat. To wear one at all on Sunday morning in the height of the season in Piccadilly outraged every fibre of his nature; to wear it with a frockcoat was, as I have said, impossible. But what was to be done? Russell thought of staying at his club until another tall hat should arrive from Grosvenor Place. I suggested, however, that we might take a cab, and he might go in it without a hat; people could suppose that he had uncovered on account of the heat. some misgivings he consented to do this; we went down the steps of the club and nodded to a cab.

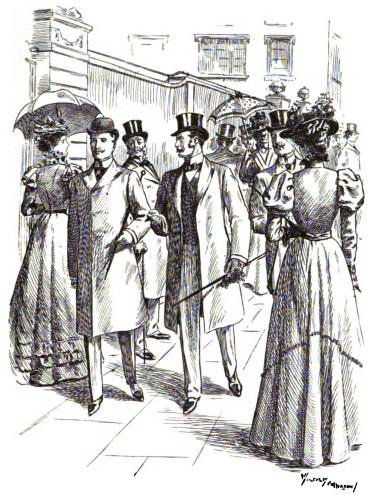
At that moment (the stars in their courses fighting against my much-tried friend) Lord X. came up. Now, Russell was slightly acquainted with him, and no doubt would have been glad at any other time to cement the friendship. Lord X. is a very rich peer (the fourteenth earl of his family, I believe), a great racing man, very popular, and among other things on the committee of a club for which at that time Russell was standing. But Lord X. is also very unconventional, not to say eccentric, concerning things which seem to him to be unimportant. I have no doubt that if it were convenient to him to walk down Piccadilly in knickerbockers, no consideration of propriety would prevent him.

"Oh, Bantock," he said; "you're the very man I wanted to meet." Russell, I could see, was pleased by this address; how

well tell you, and you can explain to him."

"Certainly," said Russell; "won't you come in here?"

"Afraid I haven't time," replied



"If you mention that hat again I shall smash it in."

little do we foresee our troubles, even the most prudent of us! "I hear," continued Lord X., "that your father's thinking of taking a moor this year. I think I can let him have Strathpellan."

"That will be capital," Russell said.

"Yes, but there are certain things to be explained; things he'd better understand before he thinks it over. I can just as

Lord X., taking out his watch. "No; I'm due at the Wellington—lunching with a man. There's time to walk, though. Look here; are you going home? Well, let's walk together," including me with a glance, "and I'll explain as we go."

"But," said Russell; "but—I should be delighted—but—I've no hat."

He explained the hat tragedy. Lord X. was certainly very dense; he only said: "Well, but the other chap's hat fits you, I suppose, if yours fitted him. Bring that hat," he called to a waiter, who was on the top of the steps. We knew it fitted; it was by that, the tall hats having been examined in vain, that we knew it was left by the appropriator of Russell's.

The waiter brought it, and Russell put it on with a bitter smile.

"That's all right," said Lord X., with heartless cheerfulness. "Come along."

"But I can't walk down Piccadilly in a frock-coat and a pot hat," said Russell.

Lord X. laughed—positively laughed.

"You young men are much too particular," he said; "it will do you good. What on earth does it matter? Come along."

Russell looked at me. I knew how terrible a struggle must be going on behind his mask—so splendidly indifferent. At any other time he would have liked very much to walk down Piccadilly with Lord X. But now! Think of it! It was Sunday morning, at the height of the season, about half-past one. Piccadilly would be full of people coming out of the Think of Russell passing Hyde Park Corner in a frock-coat and pot hat! I remembered in a flash how, a little while since, he had decided to cut a man he saw in Pall Mall who was wearing a cut-away black coat (merely) with a pot hat, even though it was pointed out to him that the man was fresh from Australia, and might not have known instinct should have taught him, Russell Imagine Russell's feelings now! On the one hand, the risk of annoying Lord X., and possibly (his peculiar ideas considered) of incurring his contempt; on the other hand, the certainty of an outrageous appearance and the dread of misconstruction by his friends. presence of X. did in a way save the situation, but everybody who knew

Russell might not know X. by sight, and it would be impossible to explain to them all. A terrible struggle!

X. waited a minute, and then said in a tone of most unjustifiable irritation: "Oh, come along! Or—just as you please." That decided Russell. He set his face, and the fateful journey began, Russell was for keeping on the Green Park side of Piccadilly, but X. said: "Let's cross; I like to see my friends." So in obedience to this fatuous goodhumour we walked along by the clubs and the houses, meeting a throng of people coming from the Park. It seemed as though the whole of Russell's acquaintances was there to mock him. He had continually to smile, as best he might, and take off his abominable hat. Meanwhile. Lord X. pursued his vain chatter about Strathpellan. I have always admired the Spartan boy who said nothing of the fox that gnawed his vitals, but what was he to Russell Bantock? I watched him; his face was calm; every now and then he made an intelligible reply to Lord X. But, of course, when he had an opportunity, he stopped for a moment to explain his distressing costume to his And even that slight mitigation was presently denied him. the third occasion Lord X., with almost inconceivable brutality, exclaimed: "If you mention that hat again I shall smash it in; I'm sick of it." Russell bit his lip, but took the brutal hint. Not a word of reproach did he say, and he was only twenty-six years old! At last we reached the Wellington-it seemed a week to me, to Russell it must have Lord X.'s last remark seemed a year. was: "You'd better put that hat in a glass case and tell the story to your grandchildren." It might have been a tardy recognition of heroism, but I fear it was We hurried down but silly sarcasm. Grosvenor Place and the ordeal was over.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



Windermere.
(Photo, Pettitt, Kenvick.)

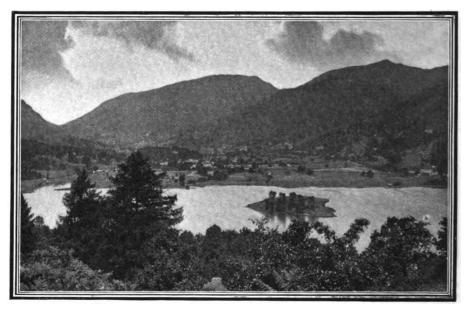
A HOLIDAY IN LAKELAND.

BY JOSEPH SHAYLOR.

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOS BY A. PETTITT, KESWICK.

HERE is probably no locality in this country that presents such a delightful freshness and charm upon a first visit as the district commonly known as lake and. To most people who have not visited it, lakeland simply means a vast area situated somewhere in Cumberland or Westmoreland, and composed principally of mountains and water, quite inaccessible, on the ground of expense, to the ordinary holiday seeker; but to those who have once seen it the recollection of its beauties will remain with them for ever, for it is indeed a veritable Paradise of wondrous beauty, and one which has required the inspired pens of our "Lake Poets" to adequately describe. beauty of the district is intensified by the desolation, from a picturesque point of view, through which we pass in the railway journey, more especially near Leeds and Sheffield. It is all very well to know that, " If there is no smoke and dirt in Sheffield there is no money in England," but it is most unpleasant to be covered with the dust and grime that are given off in the process of making that money.

Upon arriving at Windermere the unpleasant past is forgotten in the contemplation of the gorgeous panorama which unfolds itself. As the visitor passes up the lake in one of the small steamers, he cannot help feeling that the romantic charm of the voyage is somewhat lost by this means of transit, and the imagination conjures up the delight it would be to row up in true Venetian style with all that brilliancy of colour to lend charm and contrast, which alone would give harmony and effect to the picturesqueness of such surroundings. However, after a journey of 260 miles by rail, this trip of nine miles up the lake of Windermere to Ambleside was a veritable "viewing of the promised land," and brought that repose of thought and spirit so essential to a thorough appreciation of the beauties of Nature.



Grasmère. (Photo, Potitt, Kowick.)

As a centre, no better selection could be made than Ambleside, and there is no better hotel at which to stop than the Salutation." Here we are not only surrounded by the grandeur and beauty of the country, but near the town are many of the hallowed spots and associations which have made the lake district known wherever the English language is spoken. Here, also, the coaches start on most of the excursions which should be taken in the district.

We will commence with Lake Windermere, the largest of all our English lakes. Excursions may be here taken either by the steamer down to Lakeside or to any of the stopping-places on the way, or again, a small boat may be hired at Waterhead, in which a whole day may be profitably spent in visiting the beauties of its shores. The principal village on the lake is Bowness, with its lovely church which stands boldly out on the hillside, and its flotilla of electric yachts, together with pleasure boats of all descriptions. The Ferry and the village of Windermere are each worth a visit, whilst from the

lake itself, the mountain heights of Red Screes and High Street may be seen rising in majestic boldness, and an occasional glimpse of Fairfield, Nab Scar, and the mighty Helvellyn may also be obtained. A day might be spent on the lake in fishing, as capital sport with perch, trout, &c., can be obtained by lovers of the gentle craft.

Starting on foot from Ambleside, it would be impossible to find a short walk with more lovely surroundings than that to Stock Ghyll, distant only a few hundred yards and under the slopes of Wansfell Pike. The Force is most picturesque, and has a broken leap of 120 feet. Should the weather be wet, which is usual in this district, the fall is of a bold and striking A charming walk may also be taken past St. Mary's Church, which, although built from designs by Sir Gilbert Scott, is not of a very elegant exterior, across the fields which lead up the Rothay Valley and over Miller Bridge, under the prominent residence of the Rev. Canon Bell, from thence to Rydal Mount-for many years the home of the poet

Wordsworth—cross over the Rothay river by the stepping-stones, and back by the high-road; this will be found one of the most interesting walks from Ambleside.

Should a walk of a more robust character be desired, nothing could be better than a climb up Wansfell Pike, for here the most fastidious lover of Nature will be satisfied. The climb, which is about 1,600 feet, is rather trying, but the panorama which is unfolded upon reaching the top quite repays for the exertion of making the ascent. The scenery from the top of the Pike is of an almost indescribable character, in one direction a full length view of Windermere being obtained. To the north we may see Kirkstone Pass and into Scotland. Coniston Old Man, Scaw Fell, and Bow Fell are seen in the distance, whilst still farther afield Morecambe Bay and the hot white furnaces at Barrow are plainly discernible; Grange and several of the Yorkshire hills being also visible. Grasmere, many

of the Tarns, together with the nearer mountain ranges, present a picture which it is quite impossible for words to portray.

Wordsworth has thus sung the praise of Wansfell Pike—

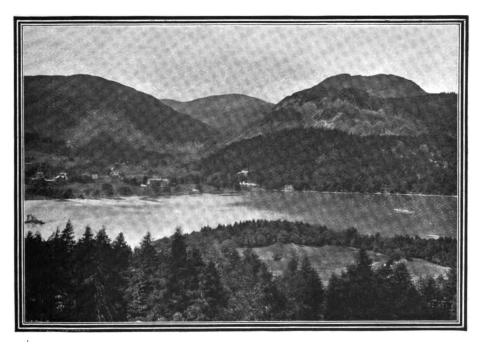
"Ne'er a note

Hath sounded (shame upon the Bard) thy praise, For all that thou, as if from Heaven hast brought Of glory lavished, in our quiet days,

Bountiful Son of Earth!"

Should a less toilsome tour be undertaken, then the most desirable is to climb Loughrigg. This is over 1,000 feet, and from it an extensive view of the surrounding country can be obtained.

The last walk to be described, and, from a literary point of view, the most interesting, is that to Grasmere. Leaving Ambleside we pass the Knoll, where Harriet Martineau once lived and where she wrote many of her books. The road passes on to Wordsworth's seat. Here, by the roadside, the poet is said to have



Ullerwater.
(Photo, Pottitt, Keswick

written many of his poems, and from this spot a good view of Rydal Water may be obtained. The cottage in which Hartley Coleridge resided for many years, and which is distinguished by a black tablet over the door with an inscription, "J. and

pher and Poet." In the south-west corner of the churchyard rest the remains of many of the Wordsworth family, the centre of interest being those bearing the inscriptions "William Wordsworth, 1850;" "Dorothy



Kestvick.
(Photo, Pettitt, Keswick.)

A. Pattinson, 1702," is passed on the right, as also is Dove Cottage; this was Wordsworth's first home, and afterwards De Quincey's. It is now the property of the English people, and is used as a museum of literary and other relics connected with Wordsworth and De Quincey, the cottage being purchased and endowed through the instrumentality of the Rev. Stopford Brooke and his brother.

Arriving at Grasmere, we are in the midst of the country which did so much to inspire and give colour to our lakeland poets. A visit must of necessity be paid to the church, which contains a number of interesting memorial tablets; but the most interesting of them all is that to William Wordsworth: "A true Philoso-

Wordsworth, 1855." Near these is the grave of Hartley Coleridge, and of each of these it may well be said that he "being dead yet speaketh." A week, moreover, might be easily spent at Ambleside, for each day fresh districts could be traversed and new excursions made into the picturesque and beautiful.

As a starting-point from which to reach the principal lakes, Ambleside is, as before stated, the most satisfactory, for here the supply of excellent coaches appears unlimited. A few details connected with the most important tours may not be without interest. First in point of excellence is that to Coniston. Leaving Ambleside, and passing through Clappergate to Brathay Bridge, a capital view is

obtained of the Langdale Pikes and Bow A short distance farther we get a good view of Esthwaite Lake and Hawkshead. A descent should here be made to visit the quaint little market town of Hawkshead, in which is situated the Grammar School, founded by a former Archbishop of York, where William Wordsworth and his celebrated brother, Dr. Wordsworth, received a part of their education. The old school-house is still an object of great attraction. The desk at which the poet sat, and in which he carved his name, is still preserved intact. The carving is, however, covered with glass to prevent any outrage being perpetrated upon so valuable a relic. rings in which the thumbs of boys were inserted when receiving their castigation are also carefully treasured. Irrespective of these associations, the little town itself is well worth a visit for many of the houses have a curious old-

time appearance about them. A number of the dwellings are quite devoid of incommunication side the lower between and upper rooms. The occupants, therewhen retiring have to come out of their living room and pass up to their sleeping apartment by stairs from the outside; certainly not a very pleasant experience on a bleak winter's night.

range or by exploring the lake in one of the steam gondolas. The principal object of interest here is "Brantwood," the residence of Professor Ruskin; but from the lake side, Pike O'Blisco, the Langdale Pikes, Fairfield, Red Screes, Saddleback, and many other of the various mountain ranges are plainly discernible. The return journey is made through Yewdale and Tilberthwaite.

The Langdale drive is generally thought to be the prettiest in the district, but among so many that are beautiful comparisons are only a waste of time. Crossing through the heart of the lovely Brathay Valley to Skelwith Bridge, and on to Colwith Bridge, a stop should be made to visit the Force. To see it to its greatest advantage it is necessary to make a descent to the foot by means of a ladder, when a lovely fall of over eighty feet is seen revelling and dancing in all its solitary grandeur.



Wythburn Church.
(Photo, Pettitt, Keewick.)

Passing on to Tarn Haws we not only get the most exquisite sight of Coniston Lake, but one of the finest panoramic views of the fells of Westmoreland and Lancashire to be had in the Lake District. Arriving at Coniston, a few hours can be well spent either in visiting what is termed the Old Man at the top of the Coniston

Little Langdale and Blea Tarn are passed before arriving at Dungeon Ghyll Hotel, from whence Bow Fell and Crinkle Crags appear in view. Here, again, the principal attraction is the waterfall, distant about one mile, the rough scramble over the fern-covered ground being amply repaid by the beauty of this fall. Dungeon

Ghyll Force is the most unique of all the waterfalls in the Lake District. It is situated between perpendicular cliffs over one hundred feet high, connected at the head by two rocks wedged together, thus forming a natural bridge. We are here in the heart of the scenery so graphically described in Wordsworth's beautiful poem, "The Excursion." The poet sings of these falls—

"It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock.
The gulf is deep below,
And in a basin black and small
Receives a lofty waterfall."

In close proximity to Dungeon Ghyll is Hell Ghyll, which savours somewhat of

Honister Pass.

Photo, Pettitt Kenwick.

Satanic associations. Can there be any legend suggestive of this? No one in the district appears to know of one. In returning we noticed that the devastating hand of the miner has spoiled much of the picturesque character of the country, as the débris from the slate quarries is thrown up on every side. Having reached Grasmere, a commanding sight is obtained from the Red Bank, which, from an artistic point of view, is probably the choicest in the Lake District.

The Ulleswater tour is to many the most important of all the excursions on account of the extent and beauty of the lake. Starting by the Kirkstone Road, said to be the highest coaching road in England, we pass up to the inn called the "Travel-

lers' Rest." This is situated at the greatest altitude of any house inhabited all the year round in Great Britain, being 1,467 feet above the sea-level. From thence we enter Kirkstone Pass, a barren region inhabited principally by sheep, these having a begrimed and dirty appearance. We were informed that they feed here the whole year round, being occasionally collected by welltrained sheep-dogs which are directed by a shepherd from the top of the Pass. It appeared somewhat difficult to imagine how the sheep obtained sufficient pasturage, as the rocks were so bare. These were not, however, an American informed us, so bare as some rocks in his country, where they have to let the sheep down the ravines and fissures supported by bands in order that they may nibble off the blades of grass which grow in the crevices. Our Yankee cousins always appear able to outdo us in either fact or

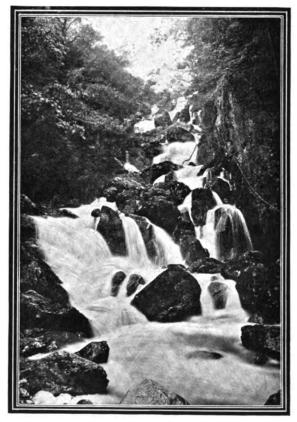
fiction. Two packs of hounds are kept in the immediate vicinity, the one at Ulleswater and the other at Kirkstone Pass, and hunting is greatly indulged in during the season, and this in spite of the apparent difficulty that the foxes must experience in finding cover on account of the absence of bushes or undergrowth. We were told, however, that they live principally under the broken rocks or in caves, and that as many as fifty have been killed during one There is also a plenseason. tiful supply of trout in the stream which runs through the Pass.

Brothers Water, which is at the bottom under the shadow of Dovedale and Dove Crag, received its strange name through the fact of two brothers having the misfortune to lose their lives in it. Fish is here very plentiful, and may generally be seen leaping in playful moods as if offering an induce-

ment to the fisherman to try and catch them.

On the left we leave the road which leads to the foot of Helvellyn, the third highest mountain in the district, from the height of which forty-five bonfires were visible on the night of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee.

Arriving at Patterdale, the path leads through the grounds of the charmingly situated Ulleswater Hotel, from which we board the steamer which runs between Patterdale and Pooley Bridge, thus traversing the lake from end to end. In this journey we are surrounded by mountains and crags which stand up boldly from the water's edge. When passing up the lake an ivy-clad tower may be observed near Aira Force, called Lyulph's



The Falls of Lodore.
(Photo, Pettitt, Kenwick.)

Tower, with which is connected the following legend of a knight and a lady:

"Once upon a time there dwelt in this tower a lovely lady who was betrothed to a gallant knight. He lingering abroad in his travels, the lady's mind became affected. and she walked in her sleep. One night as she was walking near the spot where she had parted from her lover, the knight returned, and, thinking the sleeping lady was a phantom, touched her. Awaking, she fell shrieking into the stream beneath. The knight plunged in and rescued her, but only for her to die in his arms. On the spot he is reported to have built a cell. in which he lived in solitude for the remainder of his days." Such is the legend as we heard it, true or untrue.

Ulleswater is the second largest lake in

the district, and its beauteous panorama of wild and romantic scenery is unsurpassed. At the foot of the lake is Poolev Here the River Eamont runs rapidly through the village and on to Penrith. A tour through the charming Troutbeck Valley should be taken on the return journey, from whence another view of Windermere with its cluster of islands is obtained. Before arriving at Lowood we pass "The Mortal Man" Inn, and then catch a glimpse of the Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancashire mountains, and thus on to Ambleside.

In these tours we found the American nation always well represented, many of them fully carrying out their national characteristics of having known and seen the biggest and best of everything the world could produce, with which was occasionally coupled an overdose of egotism and eccentricity; whilst others worthily reflected all that was best in that great country.

No tour of the English lakes would be complete without a visit to Keswick, for not only is the best tour in the whole of the district taken from here, but the journey from Ambleside to Keswick is one of the most interesting and picturesque. Passing through the Rydal country, we enter again the lovely valley of Grasmere and on the commencement or the ascent of Dunmail Raise. As we climb this Pass. which is 783 feet above the sea, a peculiarly bold rock stands prominently out on the top of Helm Crag. This rock, with the aid of a vivid imagination and a description by the coach-driver, can be made to resemble the outline of a woman playing an organ. On reaching the top "the appearance of the figures change," as the showman remarks, and they assume the outline of a crouching lion with a lamb by its side. The lion is certainly quite distinct, but the lamb is doubtful. It was observed that possibly they were lying together in the manner suggested by Mark Twain, the lamb inside the lion; but the idea did not meet with general approval.

After arriving at the top of the Pass we cross the boundary that divides Cumberland and Westmoreland, a heap of stones by the wayside being supposed to mark the burial-place of Dunmail, the last king of Cumbria. A stoppage is next made for a visit to Wythburn Church, stated to be the smallest but one of all the churches in Great Britain! The poet has said of it—

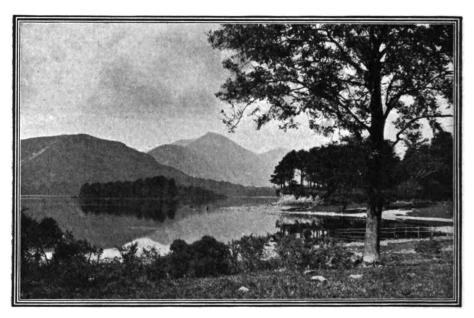
"Wythburn's modest house of prayer, As lowly as the lowliest dwelling."

The church has in it a beautifully stained window, presented as a memorial of the vicar who has held the living for forty years. A poem by Hartley Coleridge is hung inside the door, one verse of which is well worth quoting—

"Humble it is, and meek and very low,
And speaks its purpose by a single bell;
But God Himself and He alone can know
If spiry temples please Him half as well."

The reservoir of Thirlmere in all its beauty now comes in view. Much has been said of the disfigurement of this lake by the Manchester Corporation, but this is quite a mistake, and the Corporation are to be congratulated upon a venture which is at once so bold and unique. In the construction and in the building of its aqueduct, which is nearly ninety-six miles long, the outlay has been about three millions, and the inhabitants of Manchester have every reason to be proud of such a gigantic undertaking and of the arrangement whereby they are assured of a plentiful supply of good water. As a result of engineering skill and resource the water of this lake was raised twentyfive feet, and a rock upon which the initials of Wordsworth, Samuel T. Coleridge, and others had been cut by themselves would have been submerged, but in order, therefore, to save so precious a relic the part containing the initials was detached, and this "Rock of Names" has

The Summit of Helvellyn. (Photo, Pettitt, Keswick.)



Friar's Crag, Derwentwater.
(Photo, Pettitt, Reseick.)

been built into a cairn by the roadside, and thus preserved.

By a steep descent we enter the town of Keswick, which is well worthy of our notice. Keswick is one of the most important towns in the Lake District, having a population of about 4,000. It is especially important as the best centre from which the wild west scenery of lakeland can be visited; but it has also many manufacturing industries, the principal among them being that of the lead-pencil. factories are open to the public, and there can be seen the lead in its molten condition. It is supposed to be obtained in the district; but nearly the whole of it comes from abroad. From the ovens it is made into strips for insertion in the wood, which is then shaped and polished. In the space of an hour its complete manufacture can be seen, even to stamping the name and tying them up in bundles for the retail trader.

Keswick is situated in the midst of beautiful and romantic surroundings, glorious Derwentwater being close to the town, whilst Skiddaw towers its cloud-

capped head high up into the heavens. Bordering on the River Greta are the extensive Fitz Recreation Grounds, and within easy walking distance is Crosthwaite Church, where the mortal remains of Robert Southey rest at peace in its churchyard. A pleasant walk is that to Castle Head at the top of a well-wooded hill about half a mile from the town, from whence a striking view may be obtained of Derwentwater and the entrance to Borrowdale. The crags are also impressive in their rugged grandeur, notably Falcon, Red Pike, and Walla. A journey may also be made with advantage to the Druidical Circle, which is also only a short distance from the town. monuments of an unknown past have many strange legends connected with them; they are, however, popularly believed to be the remains of a temple in which the peculiar religious ceremonies of the Druids were performed.

The pleasantest tour in the immediate vicinity of Keswick is that to Friar's Crag and by boat on Derwentwater. This queen of lakes is at its greatest depth

eighty-one feet, and is about three miles long, being 238 feet above the level of the sea. What a delight it is to row among its numerous lovely islands; concerning which many weirdly fascinating legends are related. On one a rookery is situated, and, judging from the noise made at twilight, its inhabitants must be very numerous. It was from this island that Lady Derwentwater is reported to have escaped pursuit during the Rebellion of 1715, taking with her the family jewels. The Lady's Rake (or rock) is pointed out in Walla Crag as the place at which she scaled the heights.

The Barrow Falls are worth a visit, but to see "How the water comes down at Lodore" should on no account be missed, for Southey has immortalised it in his well-known poem commencing—

"Collecting, projecting, Receding and spreading."

However, unless the rainfall has been plentiful, much of the grandeur in this fall, as in many others, must be left to the imagination.

Many are the beautiful tours in the Lake District; still for the romantic and picturesque none surpass, if indeed they equal, that of Buttermere and Crummock Lake. Leaving Keswick and skirting Derwentwater we pass under the giant crags of Walla and Falcon, on by the Barrow and Lodore Falls, and past the famous Bowder Stone. This piece of rock stands on its edge and is so sharply poised as to allow of persons on opposite sides shaking hands through a hole at its base. It is possible to mount to its summit, which is thirty-six feet high, by means of a ladder which is always at hand. weight of the rock is computed to be about 2,000 tons. Passing Rosthwaite to Borrowdale Hause the steep ascent which leads to Honister Pass is commenced. Up this mountainous Pass the drivers ply their most seductive tactics to induce passengers to leave the coach, such as: "Will all the young people please to

walk," &c., which has usually the effect of emptying the coach. Honister Pass rears its grand and magnificent head high up in the clouds, and we are awe-struck when it is noticed that men are working in the slate quarries on its summit, which is nearly 1,800 feet above the sea-level.

The descent from the top of this Pass is terrible both for the horses and also for people with weak nerves, it being almost perpendicular. It is fearful to contemplate the result of an accident at this point, and a feeling of intense relief is experienced when the level plain is again reached. In passing through the Buttermere Valley the scenery is very grand, and many times are we tempted to look back at the terrible descent which has been already passed.

Leaving behind us.these mountainous surroundings, we skirt the Buttermere Lake on the left, and then on to Crummock Water. A visit should be made to Crummock Lake on account of its many interesting associations. Fishing may be indulged in to the heart's content, as char and trout are very plentiful, and salmon frequently travel up the streams by which it is served. There are also numerous boats for excursions on its waters, but the principal/attraction is a row across its surface to Scale Force, which amply repays the exertion entailed by the rough and unpleasant journey after leaving the boat. This Force is one of the most picturesque in the district, having a fall of over 100 feet, the water being converted into spray before reaching the bottom.

In the return journey we get a glimpse of Loweswater Lake. A steep ascent of a mile and a half brings us to Buttermere Hause, and from thence we proceed through the beautiful Vale of Newlands, revealing new charms at every turn, at the end of which are the stately mountains of Robinson and Dale Head. Before arriving at Keswick a glimpse of Bassenthwaite Lake is seen; but this lake is worthy of a separate visit, as it is near the centre of the

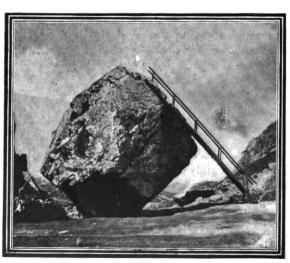
"John Peel" country, whilst a good circular drive of eighteen miles can be made round its waters. The Buttermere tour is by far the finest one-day excursion that can be had in the Lake District. scenery is so vast and so extensive, and although the distance covered is only twenty-four miles, yet the extraordinary variety and grandeur of the mountains and lakes which are seen en route could hardly be surpassed or equalled by any other one-day drive in the world. When this drive has been taken, as well as those previously described, we can with truth say that we have seen the Lake District.

There are, of course, many other places well worthy of our attention, such as Wastwater, Ennerdale Water, and the wilderness of the western districts. Many of the heights, such as Scaw Fell, Skiddaw, and Helvellyn may also be scaled with

great advantage; but to those whose time is limited all that is beautiful and best in these regions may be seen by taking the various excursions before mentioned.

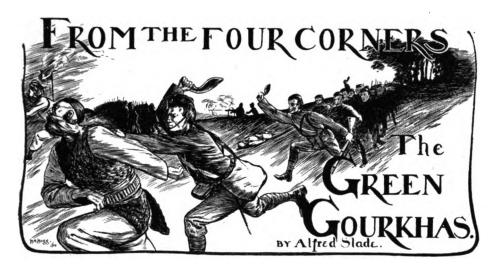
If a little more knowledge of the many beauties which are within easy reach could be more widely diffused, and greater inducement given by the railway companies to enable people to reach these districts, they would soon become more generally visited than at present, and would before long become a strong competing element with the cheap, fashionable, and, in many cases, unsanitary Continental resorts that are at present so much sought after by holiday-seekers.

[My thanks are due to Mr. A. Pettitt, the well-known photographer at Keswick, for granting me permission to reproduce the views of the scenery in this delightful district, which so greatly add to the value of this article.—J. S.]



The Bowder Stone.

Photo, Pettitt, Kenwick.)



WHEN there's trouble with the tribesmen, and their Mullahs start to shout,

And the Government expostulates in grief;

A Commissioner goes up to ask what all the row's about, And an Expedition's sent to his relief.

When the Pathans leave the villages, and scatter to the rocks, And the Resident believes it's time to shunt;

When there's likelihood of ructions and a middling few hard knocks, Then the order goes for Gourkhas to the front.

The greeny little Gourkhas to the front,

The bright-eyed little Gourkhas in the brunt;

When there's rumour of Punition,

Meaning Dum-dum ammunition,

Then it's Gourkhas, Gourkhas, Gourkhas to the front.

When the passes seem all silent, and the ambush lies in wait,
And the niggers sight their guns against the Red;
When the Tommies come up straggling, and try to form—too late,
Fall back in full retreat and leave their dead.
When the regiment's surrounded, and entrenches for the night,
And at daybreak more than half the roll-call's missed;

There's a signal for assistance, and the answer's waved all right, And the order's given Gourkhas to assist.

The gallant little Gourkhas to assist,

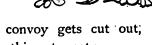
The bandy little beggars with the twist;

When the dead in heaps are lying,

And the living swiftly dying,

Then it's Gourkhas, Gourkhas, Gourkhas to assist.





When the cartridges are finished, and the convoy gets cut out; When there's not a blessed single thing to eat; When the men commence to grumble, and the officers to doubt, And the Expedition's just about dead-beat,

When the Maxims are all jamming, and the bay'nets can't advance, When the pibrochs of the Highlanders' are still;

When the hillside's fairly swarming with Afridis on the dance, The word is passed, the Gourkhas to the kill.

> The stealthy little Gourkhas to the kill, The creepy little hunters to the hill; There's no call for drum-and-fifing, When the Green Men get to knifing, And it's Gourkhas, Gourkhas, Gourkhas to the kill.

When the rebels get foolhardy, and swarm down into the flat And fall upon the outposts in the night, The army jumps up joyfully, and gets to work at that;

It's easy then to earn the Widder's mite.

A volley from the rallies, and the van spurts on ahead, And the mule-artillery begins to play,

And the Sikhs waltz in the ball-room to the patter of the lead, And the music wakes the Gourkhas to the slay.

> The maddened little Gourkhas to the slay, The springing jungle tigers to the prey; There's a thud, and there's a splashing, And there's blood-bright daggers flashing, And it's Gourkhas, Gourkhas, Gourkhas to the slay.

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THE PUNISHMENT OF PEARCE O'NEILL.

BY IRVINE REID STIRLING.

ILLUSTRATED BY BERNARD F. GRIBBLE.

E was a lance-corporal, and the biggest liar in the regiment. Not that he lied with evil intent, but the man was simply bubbling over with fiction.

A yell went up as he swaggered into the canteen, for despite an effort to hide it with his cap, there was a lump as big

as an egg on his forehead. A babel of complimentary remarks on his appearance echoed through the room.

Larry strutted up to his corner, and, hoisting himself on to the top of an empty beer-cask, gave the signal for his usual refreshment, and then faced the music.

Although his uniform was as tidy as when he left the barracks, his appearance betokened that he had been in trouble. In addition to the lump on his forehead, his face was scratched, his knuckles were bleeding, and there was a trickle of blood over one of his boots. There was, too, an alcoholic gleam in his eye, bred not of beer, and an assurance in his

manner which indicated self-satisfaction.

"This is a thrue wan," he said, as he put down the quart pot. A yell of derision followed.

"Is there a woman in it?" called someone.

"There is." There was a renewed roar of laughter, for in Larry's adventures a woman always figured.

"If it's fun you're ahfter poking at me

the shtory'll keep," said Larry, as he lit his pipe.

"Go on, Larry. Git it off yer chest. Letter go, Gallacher."

"It's a thrue wan, as I said, but divil the wan of you haythins will belave it," said Larry, as he fixed his eyes on his



"It's a thrue wan, as I said."

audience. "I was in Mother Grant's shop, collogin' wid the ould lady consarning the state of her health over wan of her own segars, when I sees her give a start and look to the dure.

"'You're out in shtyle this night, Larry,' sez she.

"'I am out my lone self,' sez I.

"'That's the third time she's passed the shop dure, since ye came in,' says she, 'an' I'm thinkin' it's time ye were home.'

"At that I looked out, an' I thought to myself, if it's that cat Polly Hardy, I'll have her to understan' that it's not me she need trouble her head wid. But just then something went past the dure with a shwish, shwish, and as I looked at ut, I saw a pair av eyes looking at me. I saw thim pair av eyes, an' by the love av Hiven, nothin' ilse. An' I felt thim go through an' through me right to my sowle, an' my heart ran to wather like the ind av a candle.

"'Mother av Moses,' sez I, 'I must see the ind av this if I die for ut.'

"'God kape you out av mischief thin,' sez Mother Grant; 'an' there's another segar for ye, Larry.'

"Whin I got out, she was ahid av me by about tin yard, walkin' like the Queen, an' wid a back on her that would have made the tathe av a wooden idol wather."

"A wuman's back's no to be lippen to," growled Sandy McVeat, Corporal farrier from the Cavalry Barracks. "I've bin dune mysel'."

"Nor 'er fice heither," cried Billy Hilson, who played ripieno cornet in the band; "I've been done both wyes."

Larry went on regardless of the interruption:

"I made up on her wan or two steps, an' then, by God, the fear av death fell on me. For I had been thinkin' to myself that this was wan av thim drist-up things out on the loose, promiscuous-like, un-be-knownst to her owner, who was abroad, for I persaved that she was not av the regular force. But begorrah, bhoys, whin I got behint her, I saw she was a lady from the shake av the flowers on her headpace to the clink av her nate heels. Wid that I shtopped in my thracks, an' was for the right-about all shakin' wid the fear av the presumpshun that had tuk me. when my heart nearly jumped out av my mouth, for I saw her guv a squint around and drap her handkerchafe.

"'Mother av Mercy!' sez I to myself.
'Phwhat is a man to do. Was that narvishness accidenthal or on purpose-like?
But maybe,' sez I to myself, 'it's a lonely
grass widder ye are ahfter all,' an' I
plucks up my heart.

"By this time my fut was close on the bit av lace she had drapt, an' I bent myself an' picked ut up.

"Whilst I was so doin' she turned an' came up to me.

"'I'll throuble you for my handkerchafe,' says she very swately.

"Not a word cud I say as I looked down at her, but I stud like a bloomin' recruity. For the scint av the handkerchafe was in my brain, an' her pair av eyes were workin' right to my sowle. By the powers, she was the swatest picture av a little woman as iver I clapped eyes on. There she stud waitin' for her handkerchafe, an' I persaved she was as narvous as I was, for her little breasts were havin' like the surge av' the say. More by token I persaved that there was a luk av sore disthress in her purty eyes, so that puttin' some shpirit in me, I said bouldly.

"'Av there's more I cud do for you than the pickin' up av a bit handkerchafe, it's me that wud be glad to do the same.'

"Wid that she blushed all over like a peony rose.

"'It's hurrying home I was,' sez she.
'I expected to meet my husband at the thrain, but I was disappointed.'

"'It's a late hour on a Sathurday night for a lady like yourself to be out all alone,' sez I; 'an' av it were not that 'tis not for a common privit souldjer to be walkin' wid the like av you, it's proud I wud be to see that no harrm comes to ye.'

"'An' who am I,' sez she, 'that shud be ashamed to walk wid a souldjer, being myself the daughter av one?'

"'An' who might he be?' sez I, feeling quite familiar-like wid her sthyle av spakin'.

"'Colonel Adams O'Grady av the ould 86th, the Royal County Down. But he's dead now,' sez she, wid a little trimble in her spache.

"'An' who but myself shud know that betther,' sez I. 'For whin he died I lost the best frind I iver had—me that sarved five years undher him—the best officer that iver wore Government leather—God save him. Faith, 'twas a fine rigiment the ould 86th, an' sorry I was that it had to part company wid me—the raison for which is nayther here nor there—an' I had to exchange into another rigiment compoged av low, dhirty, blackgyardly, jail-faced scuts, ivery wan av thim. But I'm hoping for another exchange, or a bloody war—wan or the other.'

"Ahfter that she tuk me arm an' we walked on collogin' together as thick as thaves. It was quistion ahfter quistion she was askin' me consarnin' her father, an' I was tellin' her all the shtories I cud remimber av the ould man, an' about the gloury av the ould rigiment, an' the digeneracy av the prisint rigiment, to which I have the dishgrace to belong.

"We were keeping along the quiet side av the streets, an' she had her veil down, or I wud not have bin walkin' wid her as I was.

"At last she shtopt before a fine big house in the middle av a gyarden.

"'It's home I am now,' sez she. 'Will ye come in an' have a dhrink av something, corp'ril?" For the had been makin' me spake.

"I was not ahfter denying that I was as dhry as a limekiln, an' I cud not dispute anything wid her, so I did not conthradict her.

"She stopt at the dure av the house.

"'Will ye mind waitin' a minute,' sez

"'It's round to the back dure I'll go,' sez I.

"'Wait here,' sez she, an' opens the hall dure. I stud on the mat fingerin' my cap, an' rollin' me tongue in me mout'.

"As the lady went in I heard a soft shtip comin' out to meet her.

"'Have you got him?' sez a voice all anxious like.

"'Whisht, Mary, yes,' sez the lady. 'Is ivery wan out?'

"'I've sint them all out for the night.

"'Come in, corp'ril,' sez the lady, lookin' out av the dure an' shmilin'.

"I stipt in, givin' a shquint at the other faymale as I passed; but she niver guv me a luk.

"'Come in, corp'ril,' sez the lady, an' in I goes to the dining-room.

"'Sit down,' she sez, an' I sut down.

"' Phwhat will you dhrink?' sez she.

"'It's beer I take ginerally, ma'am,' sez I very politely.

"'An' is it beer I wud be givin' to the man phwhat sarved wid my father,' sez she. 'Dhraw a botthle av champagne, Mary.'

"Begorrah, Mary must have bin ready for action, for the cark wint pop as she spoke, an' the lady poured out a tumblerful.

"I stud up wid the glass in my hand, an' lukin' at the lady, I sez:

"'Here's to the memory of your father, ma'am, an' all the happiness av the world to you;' an' wid that I dhrunk it down.

"Whin I had finisht, I persaved there was tares in her eyes, but it was not for me to enquire the cause. Thin she guv a little laugh, an' she sez:

"'Will ye have something to ate? 'Tis all set; an' ye can tell me more of my father.' The champagne was racin' in my head, like the hum av a tiligraph wire, but I kipt my sinses.

""'Tis not for the like av me to be sitting down in a souldjer's uniform at a lady's table,' sez I.

"At that she gives another laugh, but she was lookin' dishtressed about the eyes.

"'Thin you can change your uniform," sez she. 'I have a shuit av clothes which will fit you,' an' she put her little

hand on my sleeve and luked up in my face wid the tares in her eyes.

"'The touch av her wint through me like fire.

"'Phwhat am I in fur now? Is ut disirshun, or phwhat?' sez I to myself. But by the luv av Hiven, if she had asked me to walk up the chimbly, I wud have tried ut.

"'Mary,' sez she, 'show the corp'ril to the gyarden-room."

"I wint like a man in a drame, an' all the time I was thinkin' not av phwhat this all mint, but av where I had seen Mary's face before. All av a suddin it came to me. I rimimbered I had seen her at the last boxing dishplay in the barracks. So I sed to myself, 'Av you rimimber my physog, you will know thut I'm the best boxer in the rigiment.' But I sed nothin'.

"The room was a gintleman's bedroom, wid a dure leading out into the gyarden. Lying on the bed was a gintleman's dress shuit along wid a clane shirt and a white I had worn the same sort av dress in the rigimintal theathricals, so I had myself drissed in the matther av two shakes, wonderin' phwhat I was to do nixt, an' fair dyin' for a shmoke av my pipe. Howsomever, I guv myself a shake into the shuit, which fitted me barrin' a shlight grip on my shoulders, an' wint back to the dining-room. There was no wan there, so I sat down and waited. Prisintly I heard a light shtep, an' the lady shwept into the room - a complate drame av beauty. She had on a white silk driss, wid a thrain on it av three yards, di'monds in her hair, an' di'monds on her hands, an' an opery cloke like a wrathe av snow over her shoulders.

"'Sit down, corp'ril,' she sez, 'an' we'll have some supper.'

"On that the servant came in an' sarved the supper. An' being nathurally av good breeding, I was not discommoded at all, as you oneducated pigs wud have been. There was fowls, an' ham an'

thrimmins, an' I forget what else; an' the liquor—phew—there was a glass av wine wid this, an' another glass wid that, an' thin champagne, as much as you cud put your lips to. An' all the time we were collogin' as frindly as cud be.

"'Bring your chair in front av the fire,' she sez, whin the supper was finisht, an' she handed me a box av segars. 'Shmoke?' she sez.

"So I sut down beside her in front av the fire, an' she comminst interrogating me about her father. She must have bin rale fond av him. As she was spakin' an' lukin' at me so frindly, the more I luked at her, the more my hid wint round an' round. An' the divil an' the dhrink in me got a hould av me, that I must be seein' her wid the opery cloke off.

""Tis very warrm,' sez I, 'Will you not be taking off your cloke?'

"'I can't,' she sez; an' I said nothin' for I felt well dhrubbed for my presumpshun.

"'An' why sudn't I,' she sez, suddint, whin I said nothin', an' wid that she flung it off.

"' Mother av God,' I fairly yelled, whin I saw phwhat was undher the cloke. 'Phwhat has done this?'

"'My husban',' sez she, an' she bruk down cryin' fit to break her heart. All the dhrink I had taken wint out av me at the sight. Hivens! her shoulders, her breast, an' her arms were wan mass av bruises, an' all the colours av a peacock's tail. 'Twas not good to luk upon.

"Ahfter a while she dried her eyes an' comminst to tell me all about how her husban' had trated her, an', by the powers above, I was fair mad whin I heard ut all—jumpin' mad. She tould me how he wud bate her whin he came home dhrunk, an' if any gintleman frind of hers happened to be in the house, he wud be on for fighting him an' thrashin' him too. An' many a night he wud pick a quarrel wid a man in the strate, an' bring him into the gyarden for a fight.

"Thinks I to myself: 'You're the man for me,' for as you are aware, bhoys, fightin' is mate an' dhrink to me, an' I've bin spoilin' for a fight iver since I joined this blackgyardly crew, an' you know ut. For not wan av you has the heart av a mouse.

"'It's the biggest thrashin' in the wurld he desarves himself,' sez I.

"'There's no wan can do it,' she sez, an' she comminst crying again.

"'Is there not,' sez I. 'There's wan here, if you say the wurd.'

"'It's no use at all,' sez she. 'He would murther you. An' I'm expectin' him home immadget.'

"'Begorrah,' sez I. 'He'll have a rough night's wurk, whin he shtarts to murther me. An' more by token,' sez I, very ditirminst, 'this is a job I'm going to take into my own hands. Where wud ye like ut done—here or outside?'

"'Ye're a detarmined man,' sez she; 'an' I can't shtop you. You can mate him in the strate outside. He'll ask you to come into the gyarden to fight.'

"But,' sez I, 'it'll shpoil this shuit, for it'll be a bit av a shindy an' not an evenin' shtroll, an' I can't fight in my uniform, for that wud land me in clink.'

"'Niver mind the shuit,' sez she.

"'But I musht have my boots,' sez I. I wud be shlippin' all over the place in thim things.'

"I'll bring your boots,' sez she, an' wid that she fitches thim, an' I put thim on. 'You'll not be kickin' him wid thim things?" sez she, lukin' at thim wid a sort av luvin' eye; I being nathurally heavy futted. 'A kick wid thim wud be like to kill him.'

"'I'll not kick him,' sez I; 'but he'll be wurst nor kicked,' an' I doubled my fist and shuk it.

"'Phwhat a big, strong hand,' sez she, puttin' wan av her own little hands on it. 'Have you iver kilt a man wid yer fist? He sometimes kicks whin he's angry,' an' she dhraws up her dress an' shew me

a cruel kick on her ankle. I saw ut through the net av a shtockin' she was wearing.

"'I've niver kilt a man wid my fist,' sez I; 'but I belave I cud if I tried. An' as fur kickin', if he shtarts, he'll find two can play at that game—the scut! I'll make him so's his mother won't know him. I'll knock his ugly phiz to paces. I'll wipe the gyarden wid him. I'll thrample—beggin' your parden, ma'am,' sez I, 'but my timper is getting the betther av me.' But whin I luked at her she was shtandin' like a tiger wid her hands clinched an' her eyes blazin' as if she was watchin' me do it.

"'The sooner this is done the betther,' sez I. 'Let me out av this,' an' I walked out av the house. She ran ahfter me wid a cloke, and I put it over me. I waited about, it might be two minits or more, I cudn't tell, whin I heard the sound av a cab.

"'Here ye are, my jool,' sez I, whin I saw the cab shtop. I stud back a bit, an' he came out—a big, heavy built man, but fat wid good livin'.

"'What's the fare?" sez he, takin' out some silver.

"'Four shillin',' sez the cabby.

"'That's a lie,' sez he. 'The fare is two shillin', you lyin' scoundrel.'

"'The fare is four shillin,' sez the cabby; 'an' four shillin' I'll have, or I'll knock off your ugly mug.'

"'Will ye,' sez the other. 'Will ye shtep inside an' settle this little difference?'

""Tis time for me,' thinks I, 'or there'll be somebody here before me. You're going to have a betther fight than ye hope for.' An' wid that I shtumbles along and falls up agin him, knockin' off his hat, and shcatterin' all the silver about. Whin he was pickin' up his hat, the cabby helped himself and druv off.

"'Phwhat do you mane by that?' he sez, very quietly; but I persaved the man was fair boilin', for his face was white.

"'Anythin' ye like,' sez I, pretendin' to be half dhrunk, an' roundin' my shoulders. "'Will ye shtep inside an' settle this as a gintleman?' sez he, for he had seen I was in dhress.

"'Sartainly,' sez I, an' I followed him. He tuk me round to the back gyarden, where there was a bit av grane turf. There was plenty av light—the moon bein' full.

"'Phwhat the hell did you mane, ye stravagin' Irish poliseman?' he roared, his timper gittin' the betther av him, an' before I cud gyard, he had his right into my face. I dodged, but he got me on my brow—the only wan he got on my face. I went shprawlin' on me back; but I saw him—the black scut—comin' up to kick me, an' I was up like a hare, an' off wid my cloke an' my jacket, facin' him.

"We niver said a wurd, but wint at ut. He had bin a good fighter at wan time, but all his thricks were about twinty years But ut was a jool av a fight for all He had stringth an' pluck, but was out av condishun through dhrink. Begorrah, boys, you shud kape clear av dhrink if you want to fight. I cud have finisht it in tin minits; but I wanted to ornament his ogly phiz, so I started all over his face, kapin' clear of his eyes and nose, for I did not want to blind or dishearten him. He was all the time jabbin' for my heart, but he niver got near ut. Whin I had finisht the framing av his face in royal shtyle, I guv him wan on each eye, an' finisht up wid three on his nose, which will be an ornament to him for the rest av his sinful life. shtarted to finish him on the chest, for the blackgyard had shtill shpirit left in him to shtand up.

"'By the curse of St. Lawrence,' sez I to myself, 'your wife's shoulders and chist will look good beside yours,' an' I pounded him all over. But, begorrah, he stud up an' tuk it all like a man, always thryin' to get at my heart an' wondherin' why he cudn't get there.

"'I must finish this,' sez I, an' I drew

back an' gave him wan over his heart. I felt his ribs crack.

"He stud up an' screamed, wid both his hands over his heart, an' thin laned forward as if to fall. I put my hands down to catch him. May the curse of St. Lawrencerist on his black sowl; it was a thrick. He lifted his fut an' kicked me on the shin, an' his boots musht have had iron on them." Larry pulled up his trouser and showed an ugly gash on his shin.

"Mother av Hiven, but that raised me.
"'Ye'll have to get it ahfter all,'Isez; but
I waited a minit till he stud up, an' thin
he thried to get another kick at me. I
waited for my chanst, an' then I guv him
the upper cut all I knew. His tathe wint
together like the shlam av the barrick
gyate, an' he wint up into the air an' fell
on his shoulder.

"'Mother av Hiven,' sez I, 'I've kilt him,' and I wint over an' felt his neck, but it was all right. It was as thick as the neck av a bull.

"'Have you?' sez a voice beside me, all anxious like.

"I jumped round, and there was his wife shtandin', an' by the luk in her eye, I saw she had bin watchin'.

"'Have I phwhat?' sez I.

"'Kilt him?' sez she, in a hoarse whisper.

"'No,' sez I; 'thank Hiven, no. It'll tak' a twinty fut drap to break that neck. He's alive, but insinsible.'

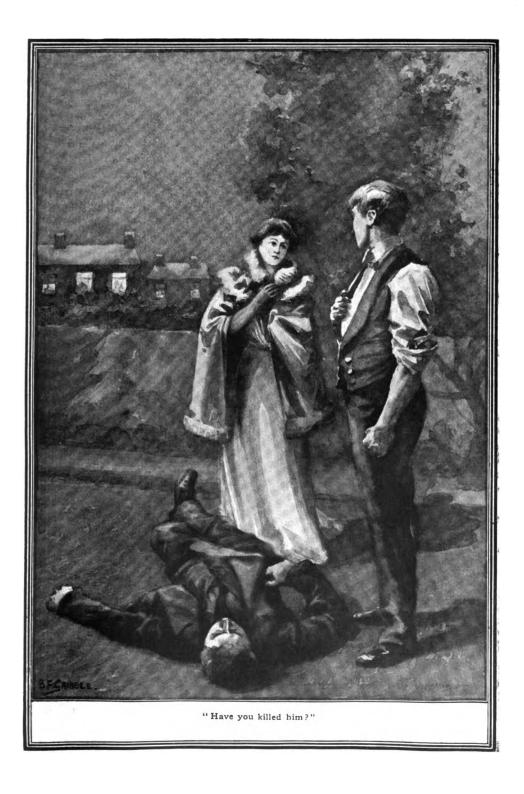
"' Have you hurt him much?' sez she.
'Do you think he is in danger?'

"'You're gettin' mighty anxious like all av a suddint,' sez I, wonderin' phwhat all this mint; an' thin I caught the luk av her eyes an' understud. They were glamin' wid hate.

"'I don't think I've kilt him,' sez I, very quietly; 'but it's in his bed he'll be for a week.'

"' Come into the house, an' I'll sind out the servants for him,' sez she.

"I wint in, an' she tuk me into the room where my clothes were.



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"'Ye'll git out into the gyarden by that dure,' she sez, 'an' thin out by the back gate.' An' she coloured up a bit, an' shovesa bit av paper into my hand. Bhoys, ut was a fifty-pund note. I threw ut on the flure.

"'It's not for that I fought,' sez I, in a timper.

"'Thin tak' this,' she sez, an' she flung her arrm round my neck an' kissed me. I held my arrms out to hold her for a minit, but she was out av the room in the shake av a duck's tail, an' I heard her lock the dure behind her.

"The firrst thing I shpied was a deekanter av whisky an' a carafe av wather, an' I needed some, an' tuk ut—a good dhram. Whin I got ut down I felt I cud go through the same again; an' thin I guv a laugh. Iverything was laid out for my comfort. There was shtickin' plashter, an' lint, an' hot wather all handy. Thank Hiven I needed none but the hot wather. I changed my shuit an' wint out into the gyarden, an' made a reconnaissance for the back dure as directed.

"That brought me into a back lane, an' from that into the strate. To relieve my feelings, I spint the rest av the evening at the theaytre."

"If a's true, that's no' a lee," growled Sandy McVeat. Larry's reply was interrupted by the sound of a horse being drawn up suddenly on the stones outside. There was a moment's silence.

"Hallo, Goring; got back?" came a voice across the stillness.

Two officers had met outside the canteen, and all listened, for the gossip of their superiors is dear to a soldier's heart.

"Had a good day?"

"Splendid, my dear boy, splendid. In at two kills and an excellent dinner afterwards. By-the-bye, have you heard the latest?"

"Not your latest."

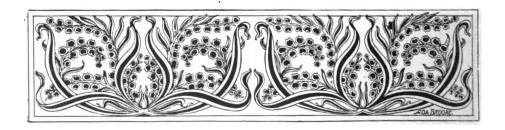
"Just met Dr. Jennings Duckworth. He'd been called in to see Pearce O'Neill. You know him; fellow who smashed up Smyth Cooper and little Lacy. Well, he was attacked to-night at his own door and half massacred by some ruffian—paying off some old score I expect. The doctor thinks he'll pull him through, but he'll never be the same man again.

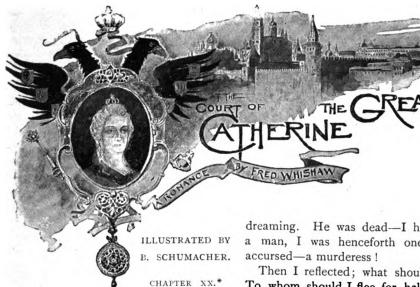
"By Jove, serve the brute right. That wipes out Smyth Cooper and little Lacy. And as for that dear little wife of his—pity, for her sake, he hadn't been killed. She might have had a separation years ago had it not been for the proud O'Grady blood in her. Dear little woman, that she is. However, that's neither your concern nor mine. Good-night, old chap."

"Good-night."

"True for yince, Larry," said Sandy McVeat.

"Thrue always," said Larry; "an' it's a proud man I am this night. Good-night, bhoys."





O this day I cannot tell exactly how it happened. There were, I think, a few moments during which I was unconscious-whether in sleep, which fatigue might easily have superinduced, or in the oblivion of faintness, I do not know; but suddenly I became aware that Katkoff strove to hold me by the arms.

The next moment I had struggled myself free, and he lay a dead man at my feet.

I did it, of course, with the axe, but how, exactly, it fell out, I do not know; he sank down without a word or a groan, with his head split in two.

A moment after I had done it I would have given all the world to have him alive again, even though I must again be in deadly danger at his hands.

I lit the candle, and fell on my knees beside him on the floor, praying aloud to God that this might prove a horrible dream, from which I might even yet awaken an innocent woman.

But my hand dipped in a pool of his blood on the floor, and in the sickening horror of it I knew that there was no

He was dead-I had killed a man, I was henceforth one of the

Then I reflected; what should I do? To whom should I flee for help in this terrible plight? I must leave this hateful lodge at once, though it was night and I was but semi-conscious from faintness and the horror of the afternoon and its climax. I would not for a queenly crown stay another hour in this room with my victim's red blood gradually monopolising the floor, and his ghastly split head gaping at me there. I should go mad and shout aloud in five minutes. I must depart at once; but whither? To Douglas, my heart said.

But, I reflected, Douglas is stern and righteous, he will call me murderess and send me away, declaring that he will have no further dealings with one who has killed a man; and I could not bear that from Douglas.

Well, I would go to the Grand Duchess and tell her the whole story. It was her fault, after all, for had not she, for her own ends, set this hound upon my scent? I should throw myself at her feet and tell her that she might have Douglas, only let her save me from Siberia or from the gallows. Yes, I would hasten back to the Grand Duchess, who had a kind heart. I

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would make a bargain with her for my life. Douglas was lost to me anyhow after this bloody deed!

I rushed out into the night, the cold night of Russian winter. I had left my furs within, but I would not return and fetch them for all the sables in Russia. Scarcely half conscious for horror and faintness I sped along the hard frozen road in the direction of St. Petersburg, fifteen miles away. Whether I should reach the city or die on the way I neither knew nor greatly cared, life at the present moment had no charm whatever for me.

Stumbling, panting along, I made a dazed progress for a mile or two. Then my breath failed, my heart seemed to refuse to beat, I felt that I could run no farther, and I sank down in the middle of the road.

How long I lay I cannot tell, but a shout aroused me; the shout of a driver who had seen me lying in the snow and had pulled up his horses in time to avoid driving over me. There was a jangling of bells and stamping of hoofs—this was evidently a troika. The man shouted a second time:

"Out of the way, there," he yelled, "unless you want to be driven over. If you must drink till you fall down, why can't you sleep by the roadside instead of in the middle?"

"Wait, Gregory, I'll get down and move him out of the way!" said a voice that seemed to send the blood coursing back into my semi-frozen veins. I struggled to rise, but could only sit up; my brain whirled. The man who had last spoken got out of the sledge and came to me.

"It's a woman!" he said, as he approached. "Poor creature, she——"

"Douglas!" I muttered, "don't touch me. You must never touch me or speak to me again; I am a murderess!"

Douglas started back with an exclamation of surprise, then he sprang to me and lifted me in his arms. I struggled to free myself.

"No, no, Douglas," I cried; "leave me, you must not touch me."

"My poor Elsa, my poor girl!" he said, holding me tightly in his arms. "Tell me all, tell me all, quickly.

"I know not whether he was more in fault or her Highness, but I have killed him, Douglas. Let me go, I am not fit to be loved by you."

"Dear Heaven! Elsa, have you killed him in truth, my poor girl, my brave girl? Oh, never think you are less worthy on that account. I love you not one atom the less for your deed, my heroine. But you shiver and tremble; you are without your furs, and in this frost!" He took me in his strong arms and laid me in the sledge, covering me from head to foot in his own huge bear-skin tooloop, kissing me a score of times, and murmuring consoling words of love. Oh, the exquisite flow of warmth and happiness that flooded into my being. Could all this be true and real? this my Douglas in actual truth, and did he condone my offence, or did I dream it? Enough, I will not move lest the dream, if dream it be, pass from me. I am lying, well wrapped up, in Douglas's arms, and the troika is gliding forward once more. Douglas is silent, musing, or perhaps afraid to disturb me, for my eyes are closed. Oh! this is Paradise after the Hell of the last half-day.

The sledge pulled up.

"Where to now, Barin?" asked the driver.

"Straight to the lodge," replied Douglas. But at the word I started up.

"Oh, not there, not there, Douglas. For the love of God do not let us go near the lodge," I cried; "you will see—him."

"It is necessary, Elsa," said Douglas, soothingly. "There is nothing to fear. See! I am here to protect you."

"Oh, but you will hate me when you see what I have done," I cried. "How can you love a murderess? You will tell



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me to go from you—that I contaminate you by my presence; and if I hear you say that, Douglas, I shall die at your feet."

"Elsa, listen," said he, firmly, yet holding me tightly to him. "I swear to you that I honour you for the deed, though I know not yet how you did it. If you have killed this man in defence of your honour—as I think is the case—no one will blame you, but all will rather praise you. Be calm, my brave Elsa. See—I love you, is not that enough? We will enter the lodge together, and you shall tell me the whole story when we have leisure."

But when Douglas, alighting first from the sledge, entered the lodge while I still remained at the gate, he signed to me to remain seated in the sledge, for the sight he saw upon opening the door of that dreadful room was, I fancy, more horrible than he had expected.

As I afterwards learned, the lodgekeeper Ivan had by this time returned, and was busy with his wife (both wailing and weeping, and crying that they were accursed and ruined) in cleaning the stains of blood from the floor, having placed the body of Katkoff upon the narrow bench which ran round the wall of the room.

Douglas, finding them thus occupied, left instructions as to the disposal of the dead and returned to me, informing me to my intense joy and relief that I need not, after all, set foot again in that terrible place.

But, as I well knew, this could not be the end of the trouble; and though all troubles must fall comparatively lightly now that I knew Douglas was still on my side and not set against me by my deed, yet the future looked black and uncertain, and though I endeavoured to think, I could not in any degree decide for myself what would be the best thing to be done next.

Should I go straight to the Empress

and lay at her feet the whole tale? She was kind of heart, I knew, and very sympathetic. Or should I appeal to the Grand Duchess, my mistress, who, when at her best, was just and noble, and whose heart was no less kind than that of the Empress.

But her Highness would not be inclined to be just, because her nobility of soul was at present marred by her sudden passion for Douglas. Besides, she was—as I feared—greatly responsible for the act of Katkoff, and I felt that I could not, in any case, go to her Highness in the present crisis, even if I should ever make up my mind to gaze upon her face again, of which I felt doubtful.

These thoughts flashed through my brain while Douglas was absent within the lodge, and I was no further advanced in my decision when he returned.

"Oh, Douglas," I murmured, "you have seen my work; can you ever love me and forgive me?"

"There is nothing to forgive, my own," he said gravely; "and as for loving—why should I love you less than before? Nay, I love you doubly well for your sorrow's sake. But there is much to arrange. For many reasons we will rest in the village to-night, and to-morrow morning we will, perhaps, go farther; it is hard to know what is best. We will consult and then decide."

So then we drove into the village and put up for the night at the post-station, an uncomfortable place in which there was no sleeping accommodation, and only one room, and that a public one.

Here Douglas saw that I was fed and warmed before he would allow me to converse; and though the fare was plain in the extreme, the meal did me much good, for I was, indeed, in sore need of food.

Then, for two hours—there being no other travellers present to render secret conversation impossible—we consulted very seriously as to what had best be done.

We were agreed that even though I were forgiven the killing of Katkoff in view of the circumstances, it would be undesirable for me to return to the Court of the Grand Duchess, at any rate until these troubles and their memory should have blown over. Neither was Douglas anxious to return at present. Bound as he was to serve the Grand Duke, and fully as he intended to return after awhile to his post, he believed, he said with a smile, that he would best serve his master, at the present crisis, by keeping out of the way of his master's wife.

Then the question arose as to whither, since we were not to return to St. Petersburg, we should direct our way.

Douglas suggested two courses. One was a retreat to his own estates—those which had descended to him from his relative, Patrick Gordon, and which lay but fifty miles away; or a journey to Narva or Reval—the latter of which ports would probably be open if the former were not—and thence, if there were any kind of a vessel available, a sail across to Hamburg or Lubeck, and so home to Zerbst.

Oh, how the very idea of escape into the quiet of Anhalf soothed and invigorated me—escape, mark you, with Douglas beside me! Were he not here, I believe I should have preferred to return to St. Petersburg with all its dangers and horrors, rather than attempt escape or tolerate banishment without him.

So then we decided upon the Reval plan. We despatched the *troika* to St. Petersburg, resolved to trust for our retreat to peasant sledges, in which we should more likely be successful in putting pursuers off the scent, supposing that we were pursued, which Douglas hardly thought likely, though I was of a different opinion.

"For," I argued, "even if her Highness should be inclined to pass over my deed, which, since at present she loathes me, I do not think probable, she will not

allow you to escape her clutches without making an effort to retain you."

"Will she so thirst for my blood, think you?" laughed Douglas.

"Not for your blood, but for your love," I said, blushing.

"She is more likely to have the first than the second, if one it must be!" said Douglas. "She must know well enough that my love is not for her; and if she knows it not, I will tell her Highness again."

Then, at Douglas's request, I gave him a full history of the surprise and horror of yesterday, and of the tragedy that ended it. And Douglas comforted me with renewed expressions of love and praise. I could not have done better or more bravely, he said; nor would he have had me act otherwise, under the circumstances.

"The scoundrel received what he deserved," he ended. "God forgive him his sins, for we will not carry our vengeance into the next world, though I do not pity him for his fate in this!"

"Oh, God forgive him—yes, and me also!" I cried, placing my face in my hands and weeping anew.

But Douglas took them and kissed me, and said that God would not account it a sin in me to have killed this man, and bade me be comforted and think no more of it. Then he told me how he had first suspected and then discovered the treachery of yesterday. He had been at the Lutheran church, leaving his place just in time to see me drive away, none knew whither. Then he had returned to Court and claimed an interview with the Grand Duchess, who received him immediately.

Her Highness had shown great annoy ance when she learned that Douglas had seen me driven away, and refused to tell him whither I had been conveyed; but on his insisting, she had declared that my destination was Peterhof, to which place she intended presently to follow, I having been sent forward to make the necessary preparations.

Indeed, the Grand Duchess did in fact drive over to Peterhof, taking Douglas in the party. Not finding me there, Douglas had threatened to return to the Empress and to complain of this mysterious and suspicious proceeding, when her Highness at last confessed that possibly Katkoff had made other arrangements for me, since he had been aware that I was to depart alone for Peterhof.

Then Douglas had said scornful and angry words to the Grand Duchess, and had obtained a sledge and driven on to Oranienbaum, where—or near to it—he found me in the road as described.

CHAPTER XXI.

When all our talk was finished, though, since we had much to say to one another, that did not happen until the hour after midnight, Douglas made me as comfortable as was possible in the squalid apartment which was all that the post-station could boast. I lay upon the hard divan in the corner of the room, well wrapped in furs, which were needed, for the cold was atrocious; while Douglas stretched himself before the door on the ground, determined that, whether innocent or harmful, no traveller should enter the chamber without first accounting for himself.

Nothing happened to disturb us, however, and by eight in the morning we were already upon our way, travelling in a sledge which we bought of a peasant in the village, and drawn by two horses hired from the same source. We did not start from the post-station in case we should be pursued. "Let our pursuers find the scent for themselves," said Douglas, "if they must needs follow us!"

And in spite of the dangers that for all we knew must be close at our heels, and in spite of the uncertainty which marred the future for us, filling all the time that lay beyond to-day with possible peril and persecution, in spite of all this, that drive through the provinces of the Baltic is one of the

sweetest memories of my life; for in love fear is forgotten or disregarded. And I was with my beloved, and spoke with him of home, of Germany, and perhaps of England, and wedded joy far away from these noisy, evil courts of kings and princes; of peaceful life with the noblest of mortal men, where there should be no Grand Duchesses to fall in love with those whose love was too high and too incorruptible for such as they!

For three days we travelled along thus in the bliss of perfect content. On the fourth troubles began.

It was late in the afternoon when Douglas, in the midst of a conversation paused and listened. We were at a spot, or near it, where a side road led out of the main way into the forest. Douglas bade the driver pull up and listened.

"There," he said, "do you hear it, Elsa?"

I did hear the clatter of hoofs, as though a party of horsemen advanced at full trot.

"It may be nothing, but it may be much," said Douglas. "Let Ivan, here, drive you a short way down the side road out of sight. I will remain and conceal myself here and watch who goes by. It is better to know whether we have anything to fear; and if there is no danger, why, we shall have lost ten minutes, and no further harm done."

"Run no risks, my Douglas," I said; "promise me!"

"None that I need not," he smiled; "for the rest, I have my sword!"

"As good as six, I know!" I whispered, pressing his arm. Then Douglas leaped out and lay behind a clump of snow-covered brushwood, and Ivan whipped up his horses and drove me quickly out of sight.

We pulled up some two hundred paces away, and with beating heart I listened as the horsemen clattered up towards the spot where Douglas lay and watched. Would they spy him out, and the clattering

of hoofs stop suddenly, and the clash of swords begin?

If so, I knew what I should do. Douglas had given me a pistol; I would run back to him, and if Douglas needed help from me, he should have it. Ay! though I shot another man as dead as the first.

Closer the clattering came; now it must surely be up to Douglas's ambush, and now beyond it. He is safe, Gott sei Dank! I muttered to myself. Yes, there go the horsemen, whosoever they may be; I can hear them now far up the road.

And here comes Douglas himself, smiling, but pale and somewhat anxious looking.

"My Elsa," he said, "be

prepared for danger and trouble; these were her Highness' men; every one of them. There is mischief in the air!"

"I am not afraid, Douglas," I said, "with you by."

"No, I am sure you are not," he replied, pressing my arm. "There are eight: Lebedef, Alexis Orlof, Shurin, Kozlof—all, mark you, of those six whom

I was not allowed to fight. They are all there, except Katkoff, of course, and three others besides."

"What is to be done?" said I. Douglas reflected.

"I would gladly take them one by one," he said, "or even two by two. But this

they would never suffer; they would fall upon me en masse!"

"Perhaps their mission is pacific," I suggested. But Douglas thought not. For, as he urged, if the Grand Duchess sent a troop after him, consisting principally of those very men who had formerly been prevented by arrest from fighting him, and who therefore hated him. theirs could scarcely be a pacific mis-



We three started on our pilgrimage.

sion, for she must certainly be in a vindictive mood against him.

"Ah," I laughed, "jealous because you have taken my part against her, and have even presumed to run away with me!"

"Presumption, indeed!" said Douglas, joining in the laugh. "To go where one wills, and to protect her with whom one is engaged to wed! The Grand Duchess

may well be angered: Lord! she would have all the toys, and the other children are to have none!"

Then we deliberately discussed the situation, and decided at length that we would not run ourselves straight into a great danger by following in the tracks of these cavaliers, who must presently find that we had not gone forward, and would then turn again and meet us in the way. Life, under the present circumstances, was too sweet a possession to hazard; we would husband it awhile, at least, and run no unnecessary risks.

So we deserted the high-road and took to that which led through the forest, urging forward our horses, and making every effort to place as much as possible of distance between ourselves and those who might somehow obtain a clue to our skilful double upon them, and follow us.

And, for a few hours, all went fairly well. But the road was narrow and bad, and we could not travel as fast as we would, while, to add to the badness of the road, a thick snow fell presently, like a white sheet, and not only shut out the view in front of our eyes, so that it was impossible to see even three paces, or one pace in advance, but the road itself quickly began to disappear, obliterated by the inconceivably dense masses of snow. To further add to the discomfort, a terrific wind gradually arose, increasing in volume and power until it had developed into what Ivan, the driver, called a mitèle, which I take therefore to mean a hurricane of wind and driving snowflakes. half an hour of the beginning of this plague of the elements we had come to a standstill. So far as could be seen there was no road in front of us, and our horses, apparently, were not standing upon any secure foundation, for they now struggled along up to their flanks in soft snow, frightened and maddened by the depth of it, and by the noise and commotion of the wind around them.

Ivan, the driver, scratched his head and

said, shouting his loudest in order to be heard, that the Lord only knew where we were, for he himself did not; we were off the road. He further gave us to understand that we must assuredly be a pair of very evil malefactors; for not only were we pursued by man, but the very elements of nature fought against us and pursued us also; and, further, that had he known of our wickedness before the mitèle arose, he would have refused to drive us off the high-road, but would have allowed our pursuers to overtake and seize us as we deserved.

All this had to be shouted with difficulty in our ears, and certainly Ivan must have felt very strongly upon the subject to take so much trouble in the easing of his conscience by laying the whole responsibility for the present misfortune upon ours.

Louglas laughed, and shouted back that Ivan had better find us shelter, or, at least, get his horses back upon the road, or he would be snowed up together with us, the just with the unjust, and all his innocence would not make his position any the more pleasant.

Then he pressed Ivan into service, and they two, with a little help from me, turned the hood of the sledge to the wind, fastened the horses to two trees close at hand, and in the lee of the screen formed by the tented vehicle, which was called a kibitka, hollowed out a place in the snow for our accommodation. Here, protected from the wind by the banks of snow, which we threw up on three sides, and by the kibitka on the fourth, we rested comfortably enough, being, of course, warmly wrapped in furs and felt, as travellers in Russia in winter are bound to be. And here we passed the night in comparative luxury, the snow having abated and the wind lulled. By daylight both had quite ceased, but the snowaround us was so deep and soft that when Douglas tried to walk in it he found it reached to his arm-pits. Nevertheless, he struggled about, feeling sure that the road could not be more than a few yards away, if only it could be found. And presently he struck it, standing suddenly no deeper than to the top of his thighs in snow. Douglas shouted and waved his arms in triumph, for, he cried, now we would drag the sledge back upon the road, and all would be well again.

But Ivan said that it would be useless and very dangerous to attempt to proceed on our journey at present; there would be deep drifts in the road, and we might get ourselves into serious difficulties. We had food and warm clothes, why not wait a day, a mitèle was nearly always followed by a rapid thaw, and it might be that after a few hours of rain all this accumulation of snow would disappear like magic.

We took Ivan's advice. It did not occur to us that the fellow could possibly have designs upon our safety; for, we thought, if we thought indeed at all, his chances of escape from this danger were surely the same as our own. We were in a common fix; what he recommended for us was that which he must inevitably do himself.

Therefore we adopted Ivan's advice, and remained the day and the following night where we were. The thaw came as he had predicted, and the rain was very uncomfortable, but the masses of snow rapidly disappeared around us, and when night fell it seemed that above half of the accumulation had melted entirely away. But during the night the rain stopped, and a slight frost set in, and when morning came we made a discovery, namely, that friend Ivan had disappeared with one of the horses.

This defection would have mattered little if the road had been light, for we had still one horse and we could easily have pushed on until we reached a village where fresh horses and a new driver might be procured; but this man Ivan seemed imbued with the idea that we we're malefactors under the curse of

Heaven, and it was probable that he had undertaken the pious duty of attempting to find the high-road with a view to setting outraged justice upon our track. This gave to Ivan's departure a significance and importance which it would not otherwise have possessed, and determined us to wait no longer for good roads but to push along as far as the nearest village as best we could, trusting to obtain both a driver and fresh horses within an hour or two.

But we soon found that our remaining animal was quite unequal to the task of dragging the heavy sledge through the deep snow, and there was nothing to be done but to abandon our comfortable vehicle—which we did with regret—and to use the beast as a pack-horse to carry furs and food, and—for Douglas would not allow me to walk with him—myself.

So we three started upon our pilgrimage and for a hundred yards or so we kept to the road; then we suddenly plunged into snow up to Douglas's middle, and struggle about as we would, this way and that, we could not again strike the narrow-road.

"Never mind," said Douglas, "we will go forward in the direction we believe to be right, and we shall find our way out of this fix somehow or other. The forest belt is a narrow one, we have at no time been above three or four miles from the post-road."

But we journeyed on and on, pounding along through the deep snow in a manner very distressing to Douglas, as well as to his four-footed companion in misery; and night fell, and we were still wanderers.

CHAPTER XXII.

The bundle of hay which we had brought for the horse was all finished; so was most of our own food. We had our furs, however, and sufficient to eat and drink for another night and day, and this present night was spent comfortably enough in the soft snow.

But next morning the horse was weak and stiff, and progress became very slow. We struggled on, however, as best we could, and if one were to judge by Douglas's heartiness, and his cheerful bearing and speech, there was no danger whatever before us, or only such perils as we might fairly make light of.

But presently the horse stumbled and fell; and again it fell a short distance on. The poor creature was exhausted. We stayed awhile to rest it, and then pushed on again; but it fell continually, and we were reluctantly obliged to abandon the animal. Douglas now bade me go forward a little way and not look back, and when I had thus proceeded a short distance, I heard a pistol shot, and knew that he had mercifully put the poor creature out of the misery of slow starvation.

But at the sound of the shot there came another sound, following it instantly like a prolonged echo—a loud shout.

Douglas hurried up.

"Hush," he said, "we will not reply, lest it prove to be the enemy upon our track. Is your pistol loaded?"

My pistol was loaded, and Douglas gave me his own as well.

"Take this also," he said; "if there is need, you will know what to do."

Then we waded through the snow as quickly as possible towards the point at which we had heard the shouting; for whether the enemy were present or not, at any rate there must be a road, or some person who might direct us to one.

He who stood and shouted, whoever he might be, left us in no doubt as to the direction to be followed, for he continued to cry out as though in the utmost terror, and after a few minutes we were near enough to distinguish that the voice was a Russian voice and a peasant's.

Indeed, in a minute or two we saw the man, who, we found, was terribly alarmed by our shooting, and now knelt in the middle of a wide road, praying aloud for deliverance from I know not what

dangers. He was relieved upon seeing us, for, he informed us, he had been in terror lest the wolves, at which he supposed us to have shot, should have rushed open-mouthed upon him, furious by reason of our attack upon them.

Greatly content was he to learn that we had seen no wolves, and that he might pursue his journey in peace.

This road was, he told us, the highroad to Narva; so that we had made a loop and returned to the road from which we had deviated in order to avoid our pursuers.

Then Douglas bargained with our friend, whose village lay, we learned, but a few miles along the road, for a sledge and horses to carry us on towards Reval. We would remain here and rest while he fetched the conveyance, for in truth Douglas was very tired indeed, the exertion of ploughing afoot through deep snow being one of the severest possible. Indeed, so fatigued was he that he stretched himself, at my entreaty, in his fur upon the snow by the roadside, I undertaking to keep a good watch beside him, and to wake him, if he slept, should there be any sound of approaching danger.

Douglas fell asleep in a moment—fast asleep, in the soundless, motionless slumber of almost total exhaustion. He had not complained during the preceding day, or this day; but, I reflected, the horse had worked no harder than he, and the horse had utterly collapsed. It was no wonder that Douglas was tired.

The peasant, I calculated, would return in two or three hours, but before that time had elapsed I heard him approach in the distance; so, that is, I imagined; for there came a tramp of trotting horses, and I praised, in imagination, our friend for his quickness, a very unusual quality in his class.

But presently it struck me that Gavril was driving more horses than two, and then it suddenly occured to me that this might, indeed, be no peasant Gavril coming to our succour, but that very party which, of all other persons in the world, we most desired to avoid. Full of this fear I shook Douglas, to rouse him from his sleep; but Douglas slept very soundly, and paid no heed to my rousing.

Meanwhile, the clattering of the horses came nearer, and I could plainly distinguish now that there was a large company of riders. My heart told me that it could be no other company than that which we had heard but three days since, now returning upon their tracks after ascertaining that we had somehow evaded them. In despair and frenzy I shook Douglas again and again and bade him for the love of Heaven to awake, for else we must inevitably be captured, helpless, and without a blow; but so utterly spent was my poor Douglas that he could not rouse himself sufficiently to realise that there was trouble in the air.

Then I tried, in my despair, to drag him, at least, into the shelter of the forest, for Douglas lay by the roadside in full view of anyone who came by; and it was while I was still busy tugging at his poor weary body, which might have been dead for all the consciousness he betrayed, when up into sight rode the party of horsemen, and I recognised at once Lebedef and Orlof and the rest, those, in fact, whom Douglas had enumerated as of the company. Then, indeed, my heart sank, and I gave up all for lost, for here was my poor exhausted Douglas utterly unconscious, and his most implacable enemies swarming, as it were, like vultures over his body.

Kozlof it was that caught sight of us first; he saw me standing over sleeping Douglas, and shouted, laughing, to the rest, and pointing.

I did not hear what he said.

Now these men, everyone of them, were would-be lovers of the Grand Duchess; not one but hoped in his secret heart to console her Highness for Poniatofsky. Every person in the Court was

well aware of this fact, and, since it was no longer a secret that Catherine had lately fallen in love with Douglas, their enmity against my man was naturally bitter on this account, while, besides this, he had ever been the reverse of a favourite with them since he was known to be a partisan of the Grand Duke's, and since also he had striven to pick a quarrel with six of them very lately, and had only been prevented by her Highness from actually fighting them one by one.

I had forgotten that it was probably I whom they sought, and that though they would be glad to settle accounts with Douglas while he was in the way, their commission was most likely to bring me back to justice.

"Ha!" cried Lebedef. "See, the murderess herself; and she has her lover with her. I will never blame Dame Fortune again."

"Hush," cried another, mocking. "He sleeps; you will wake him. Remember this is the English fire-eater, who would have murdered six of us."

"Six cowards to one," I added angrily.

"Oh, oh, silence for the murderess," cried Kozlof mockingly. "This is she who kisses and kills in the same hour."

"You are a liar, Kozlof," I said; "and a coward also to speak thus of a defenceless woman."

"Defenceless," cried someone. "What of this fire-eater? Will he pretend sleep while you are insulted? Look you, Countess, I would no longer favour such a lover!"

"Will you go and leave us?" I said boldly. "My lover is weary and sleeps, and the longer life for some of you; when he awakes you shall have what you desire of him, and perhaps more."

"When we go you will come too, fair Countess," said Lebedef. "One cannot murder with impunity; we have a warrant to take you and your lover, who is also your abettor in crime."

"He is not," I cried angrily. "Alone I



slew Katkoff. Do you think he would have dared insult me and Douglas by? Her Highness may do with me as she pleases, but she shall not touch the innocent."

"Only listen," Kozlof mocked. "Wellmistress, we will awaken him and see."

Kozlof approached with drawn sword, intending, as I fully believed, to prick Douglas with the point.

"Beware," I cried, "Kozlof. No man shall touch him and live."

Kozlof was no coward, he laughed aloud at my threat. "If we must all die when he awakens," he said, "then let us perish; but awake he must." And with the words he stretched his sword and lightly touched Douglas's body. My pistol was ready, and if he had touched him other than most harmlessly I should have shot the man dead. As it was, I was glad enough that Douglas should be awake.

He started and sat up; his eyes fell upon the party of men sitting mounted around and he started again. Then he leaped to his feet, wide awake in a moment, and drew his sword. Kozlof made a great cut at it to dash it from his hand, saying something, with a laugh, which I did not catch. The action placed him at Douglas's mercy, for when Douglas stepped back Kozlof, who had leaned over to strike, almost lost balance and fell! Douglas laughed.

"See, Kozlof," he said, "you must dismount and fight this matter out on foot; even your horse would have it so! You shall be the first, come!"

Kozlof seemed to consider a moment, then spoke, striking viciously at Douglas the while.

"This is not a matter of fighting but of arresting," he said. "You shall be spared alive if you surrender yourself and your mistress, who is, as you well know, a murderess."

I knew that this speech would be Kozlof's death-warrant. I saw Douglas start and his face flush with rage.

He wasted no more words but rushed at Kozlof, and the real battle began, mounted man against unmounted, an unfair fight as anyone would say.

Yet, fair or unfair, Kozlof never once had Douglas's life in hand. No, nor yet his own; for Douglas fell upon his opponent with inconceivable fury and rapidity, and with marvellous swordsmanship turned aside every savage blow aimed at him from above, having Kozlof more than once so much at disadvantage that he could easily have pierced him, as even a tyro like myself could perceive.

"I have spared you, Kozlof," laughed Douglas, fencing, however, as he spoke. "Will you be content and go behind the others, promising to take no further part in the fight?"

But Kozlof was furious with rage and would not reply. He only hacked the more savagely at Douglas, who laughed aloud, easily avoiding his crude attacks by stepping aside and by parrying.

"Beware, Kozlof, keep cool!" cried the others.

"Count three, Elsa, slowly," said Douglas; "and if he will have it so, at the word three he shall die."

Kozlof would take no warning. counted one, and he hacked on; two, and still he fought—a strong hitter, but without an atom of the science of defence—I hesitated to count three, for I knew the man must certainly die at the word; but when I reflected that Douglas must not fight on and weary himself, I presently counted three, shutting my eyes. Even as the syllable left my lips Kozlof drew in his breath with a groan, and his sword fell to earth with a clash and clang. He bent forward over the horse's neck, clasping it, and the frightened beast, snorting and foaming, fled with him down the road. A few yards away Kozlof slid from the saddle and lay motionless where he fell, but the horse galloped on, and the clatter of his hoofs was all the sound heard for a moment or two.

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RICHARD WAGNER AND "THE NIBELUNGEN RING." *

BY WILLIAM F. S. WALLACK.

No. III.—The Performances at Covent Garden.

THE performances of The Ring at Covent Garden are over, and Londoners have at last had the opportunity of experiencing the only conditions under which this colossal work can be repre-

sented and witnessed with mental and bodily comfort. When the scheme was first mooted there were some who looked upon the Bayreuth plan as quite out of place in London. It was urged that to spend the long intervals between the acts in dusty streets and crowded restaurants was not at all Wagner's idea; that no fashionable London audience would forsake its afternoon amusements in the height of the season to go to a theatre; that no man would be so foolish as to turn up at Covent Garden in evening dress at five in the afternoon. Yet this phenomenon has been seen, society has been punctual, and no one has noticed that Long Acre and Bow Street are not in Bavaria. Whether at Bayreuth or at Shoreditch, wherever, indeed, the work may be presented, some extensive interval is demanded so as to rest the faculties, a matter just as important as the consideration of one's dinner.

Too often is it forgotten that a dominant idea of Wagner's was the glorification of German art, and *The Nibelungen Ring* to be thoroughly understood cannot be

considered apart from this. His work was not destined to become a stock-piece in the répertoire of every opera-house; possibly there was in his mind a deliberate intention to conceive his work upon such a scale that its achievement would be very difficult even under the special conditions which he imposed, and shrinking with horror at the thought of a scratch performance by some second-rate company, he no doubt erected his structure on such gigantic lines that only the widest portals would admit it. His choice of Bayreuth was determined by its possessing advantages favourable to the presentation of his dramatic ideas. In a remote corner in the very heart of Europe, far from any touch with the outside world and by no means easy of access, Bayreuth was the favoured spot where Wagner pitched his tent, and resolved that here the German nation should worship him. When once the geography of his Mecca was determined the pilgrimages followed. The business of the day was The Ring, and nothing else was allowed to obtrude itself or distract the audiences.

In London, the thought and the worry of the world cannot be altogether excluded, but at least some approach can be made to Wagner's idea by arranging the performances so that they shall command a space of time such that other interests and affairs must be put on one side, and audiences have come to see that his method is the only one by which it is possible to witness his work satisfactorily. When it was announced that cycles of *The Ring*

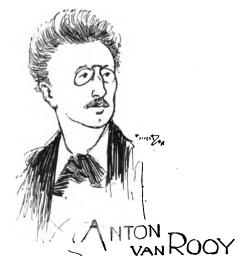
would be given at Covent Garden, beginning in the afternoon and allowing a long interval for dinner, the rush for seats was unprecedented, testifying to the fact that there was a very large section of the musicloving public ready to accept these conditions. Wagner's work is not like anything else in music; you know beforehand that it is exceptional and you must be prepared to accept the special circumstances. Faust and Romeo and Juliet are like other musical things, they are cut from a stock web, their only distinguishing quality lies in the trimmings. But to feel aggrieved that The Nibelungen Ring is what it is, is as unreasonable as to complain that the Atlantic has to be crossed before you can get to New York.

Bayreuth conditions, then, have maintained at Covent Garden, as far as the hours of performance are concerned. The rule that late comers were not to be admitted was, however, departed from, but the culprits were scarcely noticed, and every detail regarding the comfort of the audience was considered.

On June 6th the first cycle Rheingold, began, and the evening was given up to the performance of Das Rheingold, which forms the prologue to The Ring. In strict accordance with Wagner's plan, the work was represented without a break, and occupied two hours and a half. As far as the scenery is concerned, the mounting was good, but Maccunn's Diarmid not distinguished. (for which the Covent Garden management was not responsible, it is fair to state) and "Fred Regnal's" Inez Mendo were staged in far better style. The scene of the depths of the Rhine was, however, full of mystery, and the three Rhine-daughters floated most realistically in their glittering dresses. The steam went off at the right moment, and the "Wurm" into which Alberich changed himself with the Tarnhelm was amusingly portentous as it wriggled its enormous length across the stage. Wagner had all the child's liking

for seeing things actually: his dragons and bears and other zoological treasures were his toys. He did not quite realise that the terrible is more awe-inspiring when it is invisible to the audience. The painted gauze which fell between the scenes was, however, hardly successful in conveying Wagner's idea of the descent to the Nibelung's cave.

Of the representation, it may be regarded in every respect as a perfect one. The Wotan of Herr van Rooy was magnificent: his voice never wavered, and his diction was singularly clear; indeed, of all



the artists engaged he alone takes care that not a word shall be missed. M. van Dyck was a revelation as Loge. There was a Mephistophelian air about his reading of the part, and he broke new ground in his conception, even if his reading was somewhat a modern one.

With these interpretations The Ring began well, and the Fricka of Miss Brema and the Erda of Frau Schumann-Heink completed a quartet of unusual strength. It is difficult to find words to speak of Miss Brema. Her style has such a wide range that she divests herself of all personality and becomes actually the woman whom she represents. In the long pauses which Wagner gives many of his characters

it is extremely difficult to act the part of listener, but Miss Brema has the rare gift of converting the longest monologue of Wotan into a dialogue, by the way she replies with her gestures and her bearing. This was admirably carried out in the The three last scene of Das Rheingold. Rhine-daughters were excellently represented by Fräulein von Artner, Fräulein Hieser, and Frau Schumann-Heink. the last the highest compliment that one can pay her is to call her the Bauermeister of the German company. appears no fewer than seven times in the The reasonable objection to the Alberich of Herr Nebe was that he spoke The part in the first his lines too often. scene is probably the most difficult to utter of any that Wagner wrote, and the uncouth phraseology does not trip as it should. Without mentioning individually the other members of the cast, it may be said that they completed an ensemble which was as near perfection as it could be.

On June 8th the audience Die Walkure. experienced for the first time the novelty of devoting the afternoon and evening to Die Walküre, and there must have been very few who objected to the arrangement. The work has already been given this season with Wotan and Brünnhilde represented by Herr van Rooy and Miss Brema, but these artists were too experienced in their parts to require anything like a preliminary can-Scenically the settings were what have been used in past seasons. the second act, the fight on the bridge was obscured by a dense gauze curtain, and was less well managed than on May 23rd, when the "business" of the scene was at least visible. The last act was beautifully lighted and the illusion was complete.

To hear *Die Walküre* done in its proper place, and without cuts, was a distinct advantage. There were, besides, many small touches in the action which have

not been scrupulously observed in past representations. Herr van Rooy once more justified himself as Wotan, and the feeling of boredom which is associated with this character was quite absent. In the last act he was perfectly magnificent, and his exit as the curtain fell was full of dignity and pathos. Once more, too, Miss Brema showed herself the great artist that she is, never sparing herself in her realisation of her part. At the beginning of the last act her voice seemed to go to pieces. The range of the music in this act throws all the strain on the high notes, just as in the second it lies in the lower register, and so the part is an exacting one, but Miss Brema would do well to spare herself, for she is too rare an artist to be lost to us by reason of her voice failing her. In her Brünnhilde dress she looked like Pallas Athene.

Frau Schumann-Heink is the best representative of Fricka that has been seen. She is the shrewish wife to the life in the second act, and the rich notes of the lower register of her voice are very beauti-Madame Eames made her first appearance as Sieglinde at this performance, and sang perfectly, but her dramatic style is somewhat listless and lacks fire. She did not seem to be carried away or touched by the passion of the first act, and her gestures were too deliberate. While she has played Eva in Die Meistersinger and Elsa in Lohengrin this season in a manner that is entirely satisfying and as near the ideal conception as is possible, her Sieglinde is slight and fragile. With the possible exception of Freia, all Wagner's women characters in The Ring are thought out on the broad lines demanded by a heroic or epic theme, and Sieglinde, who broke her marriage vow and manifested an intense passion for her brother, surely would have acted with some display of deep feeling and emotion. Madame Eames appeared in a most tasteful dress. If M. van Dyck was somewhat inadequate vocally, at least he made up

for any deficiency in this respect by his admirable acting, and his rendering of Siegmund was full of sound knowledge.

Herr Mottl made everything of the orchestra, and the tremendous music of the first and last acts was rendered in splendid style. The cuts usually made at Covent Garden were restored.

With the Prin-Siegfried. cess of Wales in her box before the curtain rose at five o'clock on June oth, and a house already roused to excitement by the two notable performances of the week, Siegfried, the most natural, the most comprehensible of the four music dramas, was awaited with great interest. was, however, less of that perfection of ensemble that had distinguished the rendering of the earlier works. The orchestra was evidently getting accustomed to the situation, and allowed one or two slips to be made in the first act. M. Jean de Reszke has played Siegfried already in London, and we have accepted him as the leading interpreter of the part, whether as singer or as actor. In the first and last acts he seemed disposed to spare himself, and it must be acknowledged that he

has played the part far better on past occasions. There were some curious tempi in the first act. The music to the forging of the sword was taken more slowly than Wagner's direction and its own character seem to suggest, and here M. de Reszke fell away from his previous performances. In the second act he was at his best, and those who know what he has accomplished in this role will know how much

this means. Herr Breuer as Mime had to contend with one's past impressions of Herr Lieban in the character, and appeared at a disadvantage. The eye is more quick to perceive and retain impressions during a stage-production than the ear is, and while we cannot always keep the listening faculty at the same pitch



Madame Nordica.
(Photo by London Stereoscopic Company.)

of attention, the eye observes without consciousness of effort what is going on. So the effect of the first act of Siegfried is practically decided by the movements and action of the characters. Herr Breuer seemed to miss points, his idea of the part is on broad lines, and during a long monologue from Siegfried he does not elaborate the by-play as we have seen it rendered on former occasions. He was tragic, full of hate, but he did not strike

that note which, in spite of the character portraying evil, evokes a certain amount of pity within us for the dwarf. is an ironical quality in the character, a savage despair and lust for revenge, which Herr Breuer did not succeed in conveying. It must not be gathered that he failed in the part, in many places he was excellent, but the general effect was less complete than we have seen it. M. Edouard de Reszke was a stately Wanderer, and with Frau Schumann-Heink rendered the first scene of the last act with great dignity and vocal expressiveness. In this scene a cut was made, contrary to the undertaking given that the work was to be presented complete. Madame Nordica took up the part of Brünnhilde where Miss Brema left it in Die Walkure. The style of the two singers is somewhat different, but strangely enough it was not felt in the last act. Madame Nordica left nothing to be desired in her rôle, and the drama ended triumphantly.

Great was the feeling of dis-Götterdämappointment among the audimerung. ence at the announcement that M. Jean de Reszke would not be able to sing the part of Siegfried in Götterdämm rung on June 11th, owing to indisposition. Possibly this illness accounted for the distinguished artist's scarcely realising himself in Siegfried two days To take his place at short notice Herr Dippel was available, and had a heavy task before him to satisfy a discriminating audience. This singer has appeared ere now at Covent Garden, and his Siegmund of last year was a notable achievement; but on this occasion he was handicapped by having to replace a tenor who, even when not at his best, towers above all others. Considering that circumstances practically discounted his performance beforehand, it is at least just to say that, while scarcely looking the part, he gave a good rendering of the great death scene and he played and sang fairly effectively. Jean de Reszke is unique,

and no one can fill his place; still, we must be thankful that Herr Dippel was ready, like a true artist, to accept the conditions. The Brünnhilde was Madame Nordica, who was magnificent in the earlier scenes, especially where she discovers the trick which Siegfried, disguised as Gunther, plays upon her; but the strain of the last scene of all seemed to tell upon her. Here Wagner has placed his Brünnhilde at a great disadvantage. Attempting in his usual fashion to explain everything fully, he gives her a long monologue in practically one key of emotion, and its context cannot be aided by the gestures or movements of any of the other characters on the stage. Hagen remains, but his duty is to stand like a statue. This scene follows the climax of Siegfried's death, an anti-climax it is rather, and the music accompanying her monologue, consisting of themes which we have been listening to for four days, takes the form of a gigantic peroration so profound in its eloquence that nothing should occur to distract the audience. This last scene, however, is absolutely the mercy of the machinist. On June 11th the pillars of Gunther's Hall jumped up and down in a ridiculous style, and the final catastrophe was represented somewhat too obviously in a quasi-panoramic style, the scenery moving vertically instead of horizontally. This is doubtless the way the conflagration should be represented, but the transition was too abrupt. Grane, too, who has to face sundry bursts of flames, had a mild attack of staggers, and the eyes should have been bandaged or covered with some semitransparent material. The horse was too prosaic altogether, and it should not have been difficult to have found some trappings in keeping with the idea of a Walkyr's charger. While the audience is thinking of the scenery, Brünnhilde has to deliver her last monologue, and unless this tableau can be managed with the most perfect illusion, the finale goes for

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nothing. As I have already said, the eye is more readily impressed than the ear is, and the full effect of the music is lost when the eye is *expecting* a change of scenic effect, which, in this instance, was a poor one. Madame Nordica, however, has been of inestimable value in these performances, and her Brünnhilde has been one of the notable achievements.

To M. Edouard de Reszke is due the highest praise for his Hagen. This grim figure of fate in black and steel, majestic and strong, will not soon be forgotten. It is the consummate creation of this artist's many rôles, and it is the greatest

compliment that can be paid this superb performance to say that Edouard made the absence of Jean the more conspicuous, the more regrettable. Another fine assumption was the Waltraute of Frau Schumann-Heink. whose readiness, whether as Walküre or Rhine-daughter or Norn, not to mention her Fricka and Erda, has been a

distinct feature of the cycle. The other parts were all adequately represented.

As in the other dramas, the scenery in this, about which we had been led to expect so much, was not distinguished by any remarkable departures from the custom of Covent Garden in these matters, and the chorus was what we have already become hardened to.

In speaking of *The Ring* exigencies of space have excluded much mention of the music. In *Götterdämmerung* we have Wagner in his maturity. The entire drama is a colossal Funeral March to celebrate the obsequies of the Gods. The first act, the incidental music, and that Trauermarsch, which makes even

death consoling—these stand high among the tokens of man's accomplishment. Wagner had begun to comprehend himself at last. In Rheingold the method of procedure occupied his mind; in Die Walküre his material was becoming more familiar. Siegfried in the first act (I am putting aside the strict chronological sequence of composition) lacks contrast; it is mainly in the same sombre, and, it must be confessed, somewhat wearisome, timbre and colour, and until light comes with the forging of the sword, the solitary relief is when the Wanderer theme appears. Cuts have been spoken of, and I must

confess myself enough of a vandal to approve of the excision, for the sake of scenic presentment, of much that is tautological. In the concert-room things are slightly different, but on the stage, where the faculties are divided between eye and ear impressions, the one has to work in perfect balance with the other. Wagner

is reaching a large number of listeners who in past days deemed him beyond all comprehension, but for the sake of the Master, whom all revere as one of the world's conquerors, it is better that the stage performance should not again and again be interrupted by dull moments when some character chooses to be a little long-winded. It is the auditif and visuel theory of dramatic work over again. However, as to the music once more, in Götterdämmerung, when Wagner had forgotten how he had begun, when he had got rid of Wotan and the other incomprehensible divinities, he became more True it is that his magic and human. potions were peculiar in their action, but



still there is an air of humanity in the dramatic scheme. The passing of the gods does not foreshadow musically the redemption of mankind. It is well, for we have in *Parsifal* not a sequel in intention, but a philosophic epitome of all that Wagner himself strove to accomplish. In Wagner lies one great example of continuity of aim, for, with all his seeming aberrations and his plunges into side issues, he nevertheless knew what he had to do, and he did it.

In considering the net Conclusions, artistic result of these Ring performances, one must put on one side all questions of comparisons with productions elsewhere. We have to estimate their value only as regards the progress of music in this country in general, and at Covent Garden in particular. Bayreuth itself has not been regarded as above criticism, and so it cannot be held in the light of a rule to go by. We know, however, what Covent Garden has been in the past, we know, too, how it took years for Tristan to be produced here. There was a day when even Lohengrin was looked upon as quite an exceptional affair. These works are now stock pieces, and Wagner is the strongest card for the Covent Garden management to play. The present season has testified to the fact that Wagner, when adequately presented, does not spell ruin, no more than Shakespeare does in the hands of Sir Henry Irving and Mr. Beerbohm Tree. The comparison may provoke the ire of Mr. Bernard Shaw, and tempt him from his chosen obscurity of domesticity to take up arms in demonstrating by some delightful Hibernian periphrasis, that Wagner, and not Shakespeare, is our national minstrel.

We are face to face with a strange revolution of popular taste, a wave of emotion perhaps, perhaps a conscience awakened at last to give genius its due. This season at Covent Garden has been literally a Wagnerian Festival, and we have had three or even four of his works represented in each week since the season opened. The public want Wagner's music, and insist on having The concert rooms of late have drawn the biggest audiences with Wagner, and when Herr Mottl, at a recent concert, gave up at least half of his programme to other composers, the house was scarcely enthusiastic over his masterly performance of Mozart's Jupiter Symphony. Wagner, indeed, may look down from Walhalla and smile. The old cry when The Ring was presented under Mahler, in 1892, was that the audience was Teutonic. At the performances of to-day the German tongue is less violently aggressive, and, judging from the people in the upper parts of the house, where the real music-lovers foregather, one finds simply a thoroughly representative British The mixture of classes and audience. professions has been instructive in testimony of the universality of Wagner's influence, and we may regard the Master as having become almost an integral part of the British Empire.

More practically we have to ask ourselves whither these performances tend. Wagner may be the fashionable pose of the moment, but at least it cannot be said that he is to-day treated with indifference or heedlessness in the representations. The curious point is, that the Bayreuth method was not employed sooner than it has been. It must be admitted that the system has the one disadvantage of placing such complete productions beyond the reach of a section of the music-loving public who have not the leisure to devote the afternoon to them. But Wagner's pronouncement that he would not allow his work to be mixed up with business has to be observed, and if one wants a luxury it has to be worked

The public will have realised by this time that Bayreuth conditions are not absurd, not impossible, but absolutely

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imperative when a work like *The Ring* has to be represented. The relief which the long interval gives one, the possibility of arriving fresh at the theatre, and the getting away without feeling that one is in fragments are well worth any little sacrifices, and the experiment has proved an unquestionable success.

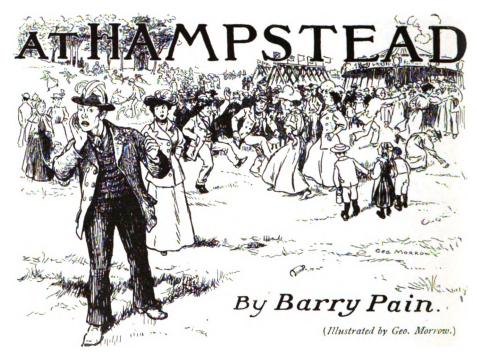
As for the performances as a whole, it would exceed the power of man to attain absolute perfection in every small detail, just as it would be exacting too much to demand it. In the general excellence a few slight blemishes are easily forgotten, and the merits of all concerned are not to be made light of. Without disparaging the work of the regular conductors at Covent Garden, it must be said that Herr Mottl transformed the orchestra into something very near his own ideal. This season there has been a little laxity in aiming at a perfectly smooth performance of the band; the first representation of Tristan called forth grave protests, but Herr Mottl gets what he wants from his orchestra, and his work was superb. Strenuous and vigilant and unswerving in his devotion to his purpose, he stands out as the commanding figure of the production; and the audience readily showered upon him their appreciation. Covent Garden has never seen any conducting like his, and there is no reason why other occasions should not be found for his invaluable aid.

Regarding the ensemble there is some comment to be made. In Die Walküre it was very fine; but Wagner's habit of working his drama by means of dialogue, of making his characters run in pairs, places one's visual impressions at a disadvantage. The actors, too, have to contend with the readings of others, and their point of view has to be a general rather than a special one. The style of Madame Nordica when she awakens as Brünnhilde in Siegfried is not that of Miss Brema when she falls asleep in Die Walküre; Wotan, if played

by the same actor in the first two dramas, practically stereotypes the conception, so that when the Wanderer appears he has to face a preconceived reading. The placing of the voices by Wagner has had much to do with this. Brünnhilde is a mezzo-soprano in Act 2 of Die Walküre. In the last act she becomes a high soprano, and certain essentials demanded by the compass of bass voices were unquestionably ignored by the composer.

And so this may explain why the Wanderer should not be played by the actor who has represented Wotan in the earlier dramas, and why Fricka and Brünnhilde should change their personalities twice over. To the credit of all it must be acknowledged that these points were scarcely apparent. The hard and fast rules of stage management à la Bayreuth possibly may have conventionalised the rendering, but when in a work of such magnitude the same character cannot always be represented by the same singer, some rigidity of method is demanded for the sake of the dramatic illusion. with the diversity of styles of van Rooy and Edouard de Reszke, of Madame Nordica and Miss Brema and Frau Schumann-Heink, who doubled another in the cycle, the contrast was not nearly so conflicting as it might have been, and the self-suppression of these artists is worthy of the highest praise. It must be said, too, that in spite of much that was rudimentary in the stage effects, the "timing" of the musical cues by the characters and the stage-bands was in most instances accurately observed, but opera-goers have a right to insist that Wagner shall be mounted befittingly. Much of the scenery was so much like an old friend to us that we can speak freely of its weaknesses.

When all is said the name of one comes back again and again to us, and that name is Felix Mottl.



Nort on this dye the 'ome of shrimps I'll view;
The giant foosher (which yer mustn't pick it)
Calls me in vine ter tike the 'bus ter Kew;
The Crystal Pallis I must leave be'ind me,
Although attrective as I'm well aware;
The Rile Aqueerum's good, but you 'ont find me
there.

Where then? At good ole 'Ampstead 'Eath—surposin'
It's nutthink wuss nor 'arf a gile with showers.
The sea 'as chawms, fur which 'Eaths never goes in,
And Kew mye lick it as regawdin' flowers;
But 'Ampstead's 'Ampstead—you can nort mistike it—
Mye 'unt the world nor find another such,
The 'Eath's the 'Eath, an' theer ain't nutthink like it
much.

It is so mixed, so var'us, so pecooler;

It his the country and it his the tarn.

'Ere mid the bracken roams the pensive Jooler;

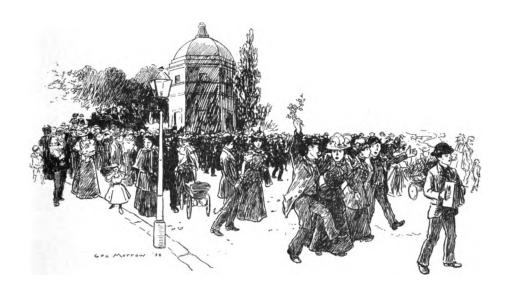
Theer Hagnes dawnces till 'er 'air comes darn.

Theer's sylvan 'aunts, the dim retreats o' fairies;

Theer's plices fur the sile of mortal tea;

Theer's swards an' swings; theer's Oberon an' theer is me.

A sort o' streak o' country fair runs through it,
Steam rarnd-abarts and ev'ry kind o' show.
Rough? Rawther sometimes. Beer? I own we dew it.
Noisy? In spots. Cheap? Yuss. Refined? Ho, no!
If you likes 'ooming Nychur pline, then try it,
You'll find enough on 'Ampstead 'Eath, I bet.
But if you warnts improvements, don't come nigh it—
Get!





R. BRENT softly closed the door of the sick-room and, softly descending the stairs, turned into the library. A gentleman, much younger than he, tall, brisk, alert, with a disciplined gravity of deportment, rose to greet him on his entrance, and held out his hand.

"Well," said this person, "and what now?"

He glanced arrestingly at the clock on the mantelpiece as he spoke, as if every second ticked off were an unfulfilled opportunity.

The older doctor looked up at his congener with an expression rather wistfully He seemed always to see in envious. this professional élégant, as opposed to himself, the triumph of galvanism, so to speak, over backbone.

"Nowadays," he would think, "success goes to the honeyed phrase and the passionless tabloid. Rough-hewn science is out of date. It is time I walked off with my jalap and my calomel, and left

"Hannan," said he, "I have been constrained to ask you to this consulta-

He was bearded, blunt, thickset, and he wore gold-rimmed spectacles. In his bourrue-bienfaisance, in his honesty, and in his brusque insuavity towards such as would compel his sympathy without justification, he was the very type of the dogmatic family doctor-of the gruffly practical allopathist of the old school.

The younger man, quite pleasantly conscious of all that was implied in the infelicitous form of words—a chafing protest, to wit, against this enforced identification of a youthful empiric with an elderly savant-accepted the form with a complacent serenity, that implied in its turn a full recognition of the sentiments that dictated it. For he knew himself to have undesignedly withdrawn, in the space of some twenty odd months, by the simple method of confidence inspired of a self-confident personality, two-thirds of the game from the other's traditional preserves.

"I am always honoured to be associated with you," he said drily. "I am at your service for-" He consulted his watch significantly.

"As long as your engagements will permit—I know, I know. You may extend or abbreviate your examination to suit yourself. The case, I confess, puzzles me; but I am willing to acknowledge myself a professional anachronism in these days of psychomachy and neurosis and all the rest of the fashionable twaddle."

"Terms, my dear sir," said Hannan good-humouredly, "are just the shuttle-cock bandied between one age and another. And while it flies the game goes on—up to eighteen hundred and ninety eight strokes, if you will. Vapours or nervous debility—what does it matter? The treatment does not alter. Shall we go upstairs?"

"A word first, if you please. I should like to admit to you, in plain justice, that this invitation to meet me is none of my suggestion. I am free to allow that, had my wishes been deferred to, I should have called in a practitioner more of my own age and understanding."

"I see. But as I cannot forgo the right to dissent, in case my judgment fails to jump with yours, perhaps it would be better even now to——"

"No!" said Dr. Brent, sharply.

He showed some concern in his face; possibly a little shame also.

"I have the fullest confidence in your capacity, of course," he went on hurriedly, "only——"

But there he stuck. He could not devise any form of explanation sufficiently polite and ambiguous to conceal his dread that this upstart might unpremeditatedly rob him of yet another of the few patients of prosperous quality that remained to him.

"Well," said Hannan, with easy condonation (he knew well enough where the shoe pinched), "let us get to work. The case, I understand, is that of the lady of the house."

"Exactly—of Miss Tighe-Lacy—at the particular request of whose brother, Lord

Quellhorst, I have invited you to a consultation."

"Ah! I had the pleasure of meeting and exchanging a few words with his lordship last week."

"H'mph! At---"

"Just so. At Charleshope, during the festivities in connection with the coming of age of the Marquis of Dinmont's eldest son, Lord Skye."

Dr. Brent humoured a scarce audible grunt that was as pregnant of meaning as an Olympian nod. "Beggars on horseback!" it expressed. "Brain and grit were my recommendations to favour. Now, in these days of the apothcosis of the play-actor, any puppy of a 'walkinggentleman,' fresh from the schools, with the assurance to pretend to a new reading of his *Materia Medica*, may take his pick from a perfect Tom-Tiddler's ground of duchesses."

"Well, for your diagnosis," he said.
"The case, I repeat, hips me. I know nothing of the lady's constitution. She comes, as you are probably aware, of a very old county family; but has only latterly settled here, in Twycross."

"Spinster?"

"Miss Tighe-Lacy, my dear sir. I need not tell you, Hannan, that it is of some importance to me to retain what little old-fashioned credit is yet associated professionally with my name."

The younger man nodded comprehendingly.

"Poor decent old beggar," he was thinking. "His anxiety, not to be ousted by a tyro, makes him appear unnaturally churlish."

Aloud, he said: "To the entire fruits of my opinion, Dr. Brent, you are, of course, welcome."

"Then," said the other, "let us go and see if you can unravel a problemless problem."

The Honorable Prudence Tighe-Lacy lay propped upon pillows in her very comfortable bed. Her eyes were closed;



The patient demurred to nothing.

her face was flushed and a little swollen; her lank grizzled hair dropped about her shoulders.

By the bedside, wedged back into an easy chair, sat her brother—a gentleman whose expression gave earnest that his years were well in advance of his intellect. Both his face and the patient's had a contour which, viewed in profile, suggested that of a particularly supercilious llama carved in wood and in bas-relief.

With the entrance of the doctors, Lord Quellhorst rose, vouchsafed a little oblique bow to the new-comer, and, walking to the fireplace, lifted his coat-tails to the glow, and stood loftily expectant. Hannan noticed, with some surprise, that a picture that hung on the wall above his lordship's head had been turned, apparently that its back should present itself to the gaze of the invalid opposite.

The confident young practitioner produced his stethoscope, approached the bed, and made his examination. The patient demurred to nothing; but she uttered no word. To all enquiry she but shook her head, with closed eyes, like royalty deprecating a petition. She bestowed her pulse as if it were an order; she put out her tongue with a mechanical resignation that implied publicity to be the chief penalty of greatness.

Presently Hannan, rising, signified that he was done. Lord Quellhorst preceded the two, stepping statelily from the room. On the landing outside he faced round and bowed once more to the younger man.

"Some remarks, sir, offered by you to my consideration, when I had the pleasure to meet you at *Charleshope*, led me to a high estimate of your capacities. Finding your reputation to justify my opinion, I requested Dr. Brent to invite you to this consultation."

Hannan bowed in his turn.

"Miss Tighe-Lacy is in a critical state?" asked the lord, as much with his eyelids as with his lips.

"I should prefer, sir, to exchange views with my colleague before stating an opinion."

"Do so by all means. My sister's library is at your service. I will preface your deliberations with the single statement only, Mr. Hannan, that the patient has had a shock. Her sensibilities, if I may so express it, are bruised and abraded in a manner peculiarly difficult to salve. That she is susceptible beyond the understanding of coarser natures it is, perhaps, needless to insist; yet I am free to acknowledge that in this instance she would appear to justify her lineage at an excessive valuation—the price of her life, in fact. If you can suggest any method of diverting the morbid current of her ideas into a healthier channel you will put me under a considerable obligation. But Dr. Brent will acquaint you of the details of this-what I can only call unhappy self-sacrifice to a scruple of caste,"

He dismissed the two with yet another little bow and a wave of his hand, and re-entered the sick-room.

Hannan descended the stairs, feeling as if he walked in his sleep—semi-conscious of an inexplicable ludicrousness. Arrived in the library, he carefully shut the door and turned to face his colleague.

"In the first place, Dr. Brent, why is that picture turned to the wall?"

"It is of the lady's father, sir—a portrait. She cannot bear to look on it. She feels she has disgraced her family."

"Now, tell me. What is the answer to this conundrum?"

"I ask you that, Hannan."

"The patient is suffering from a reasonably bad cold; nothing more."

Dr. Brent's eyes flickered behind their

glasses. He took an impulsive step forward.

"That is your diagnosis," he said, deliberate and comprehensive?"

"You must know it as well as I_do."

Dr. Brent seized the other's hand excitedly, wrung and dropped it, and recovered his self-possession.

"Of course I did," he said; and then added contradictorily enough: "You have relieved my mind immensely. I did not know, Hannan, but that my skill, not to say my common-sense, was deserting me."

"You are over-sensitive. But there is probably some hereditary aberration here."

"None that I know of. Breeding-in, sir, with an emphasis on the breeding—that is all."

"Quite so. Well, you are to acquaint me of the details."

"They are simplicity itself. Miss Tighe-Lacy lent her under-housemaid to these very festivities at *Charleshope* you were speaking of. There the girl managed to catch a bad cold, which in the result she has passed on to her mistress."

"Well?"

"That is the whole case."

" What !"

"It is the whole case, I say. You may find it difficult to believe, Hannan. I, with all my thirty years' experience of the immeasurable consequentialness of county families, have never till now, I think, realised the complete meaning of the odt profanum vulgus et arceo. It is vainglory sublimated. Now, positively this woman is dying because she has caught cold of an under-housemaid whose name is Huggins."

"Dr. Brent! Dr. Brent!"

"Oh! my dear sir, this is only, I can assure you, an eminent example of a common supercilious complaint. I could mention instances, almost as flagrant, that have come under my observation."

" You could?"

"Certainly. There was Mrs. Auchmuty, who, after cherry-pie, would have her particular stones cremated, that that which her lips had caressed should suffer burial in no vulgar dustbin. There was Miss Power, whose wenches wore gloves to make her bed of a morning. There

"I am at a loss. If it had only been a butler. But, an under-housemaid!"

"Ay—there's the rub! She's 'mixed her ancient blood with shame,' you see."

"There's no means of precipitating a catarrh, and drawing off the base residuum?"

"Impossible."



"By dame's Susad."

was Sir Joseph Quirk—a collateral descendant of some Lancastrian sovereign—who was fully persuaded he could touch for the 'King's Evil,' and who would hold you the webs of his fingers to the light to show the blue blood within."

"But this-"

"Haman, you have no conception, I see, of the fathomless depths of county humour. It makes me the more surprised to consider your (thoroughly deserved) success in a place like this. And now—what is to be done?"

"I'm — upon my word, Dr. Brent, you'll have to devise your own way out of the quandary."

"H'mph!"

"Can't you extemporise a pedigree for Miss Huggins—phlebotomise her into an inkpot, and trace her a beautiful blueblooded genealogical tree on a dishclout?"

"It's no joking matter—to me, at least, Mr. Hannan. The patient is deliberately expiating her contamination by the sacrifice of her life. By humouring her, I shall, with little doubt, lose a conspicuous patient and further weaken an already undermined reputation."

The inference seemed so personal that Hannan was embarrassed for an answer. While he was searching his brains for one a knock sounded on the door.

"Come in!" he cried, quite heartily in his relief at the interruption.

There entered a servant girl carrying a scuttle of coal. It was dismal proof of a present disorganisation of the proprieties that such a task should have fallen to an under-housemaid.

"Ah!" said Dr. Brent, "here is the delinquent herself."

"Eh!" cried Hannan, facing round.

"So all this trouble is brought about by your unconscionable assumption of a right to spread infection, Mary-Jane?" said he.

The girl looked like crying.

"I dever see sich goids-od," she whimpered. "As if I hadn't the right to sneeze in a free cudtry!"

She deposited her burden with an aggrieved bang, so that half the coals rolled out upon the floor. She had evidently been taken to task for the enormity to that degree that she had been harried to desperation.

"I'd like to leave at once," she said, kneeling down and returning the knobs with a clatter; "but Mrs. 'Arris she says it's like lettin' loose upod the world a rampid serpient. It's not much warmid at 'arths I've 'ad. I didn't want nobody to take my code. If they've got it they've been thievèd it out of be. You mide jest as well charge a body for havid its pogged pigged."

She sniffed with her poor red little nose. Her eyes swam with indignant water. Apart from these disadvantages, she was a surprisingly pretty girl.

Hannan perused her features with some retrospective interest.

"Mary-Jane," said he.

"By dame's Susad. You mide dow thad."

"I think I saw you, Susan, during the festivities at *Charleshope*. It was in a marquee, where you were washing up plates and dishes, all by yourself behind a screen, Susan. I happened to blunder upon the spot; or else I was attracted by a sound—I forget which."

The girl wiggled her shoulders.

"Oh! I see you," she said defiantly.

"It was nothid to do with be if you cub where you waserd invited."

And with the delivery of this enigmatical passado, Susan, treating the young doctor to a rather contumacious glance as she passed, hurried out of the room.

"Dr. Brent," said Hannan immediately, "I think I see daylight!"

"Eh!" cried the other, amazed; "not through Susan Huggins?"

"Precisely through her-more homeobathico. I will explain."

He made some rapid suggestions, with an amused smile on his face. Brent's eyes opened till his spectacles looked a mere glaze to their surface.

"By Jove," he muttered, "I believe there may be something in this."

Hannan stepped back and took out his watch

"Try it," he said, "try it. Who was the girl that rolled one cheese down a hill to fetch back another? Number two folly may draw up the first. I make you a present of the suggestion."

"You are not going?"

"Yes. The credit shall be all yours; and I couldn't well interview Lord Quellhorst without unconsciously appropriating some part of it. Say, if you like, that I thoroughly endorse your very original proposition as to treatment, and that beyond this I am unable to advise upon the case."

"But---!"

Dr. Brent's further protests were put a period to by the slamming of the hall door.

"I suppose," he muttered, "the fellow fights shy of being associated with me in so ridiculous a business." Now, that was ungrateful, to say the very least of it.

"I am happy to tell your lordship that the patient is mending rapidly."

"Well, Dr. Brent, well."

"Once comfortable in the assurance that Susan had taken her cold in the first instance of Lord Skye——"

"You tell me the young man was discovered kissing the girl in a marquee?"

"That is so. No doubt it was a reprehensible act so to forget what was due to his position, but——"

"It was a rather amusing freak of condescension, certainly," said Lord Quellhorst loftily. He had nothing but high discouragement for this criticising of the great by the petty.

"And the Earl of Skye was himself suffering from a cold, which he gave to the young woman?" said he; and added: "Well, she, at least, has nothing to complain of. It is, in a measure, a transfusing of the dross of nobility. This young person becomes a medium of exchange, a sort of piritual foster-sister, both to the Earl and to Miss Tighe-Lacy. It entirely alters the case, of course; and it does the patient much credit that she consents to see it in that light, and to throw off her distemper."

"I should advise a confinement to her room for some few days."

"I agree with you. This cold must not be lightly appropriated by some inconsiderable proletarian. It must be kept from the servants, who are only too ready, as a rule—shall I say to deck themselves in the plumes of the peacock? And, as to the young woman, we must consider how best to mark our sense of her—transubstantiation, shall we call it? She gains the position, you will understand, of a kind of atmospheric bastard; and as such she must be permitted certain privileges."

"Which she will appreciate, no doubt."
"I trust so. But, for yourself, Dr.
Brent—I cannot sufficiently applaud this

most fortunate application of your skill and penetration to a distressing problem, or sufficiently censure the young man, your consultative lieutenant, who had the assurance to shirk so grave a responsibility as that entailed in the distinguished scruples of a lady of high quality."

"Mr. Hannan," said Dr. Brent firmly, is a young man of respectable qualifications. But his practice does not, perhaps, justify him in attempting to deal with questions of this delicate and abstruse nature."

"No," said his lordship emphatically, "and, I confess, my judgment was astray when I suggested him to you. This unaccountable and contemptuous withdrawal of himself at the crisis!—why, sir, it seems calculated to imply that he thought us a pack of fools!"



THE PIRATES OF THE SOLENT.

THE NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE IN COMPANY WITH THE POET AND THE BOOKMAKER; CONTAINING THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT, AND SOME ACCOUNT OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES; WITH OTHER STRANGE AND IMPROBABLE ADVENTURES: EXTRACTED FROM THE LOG OF THE "FOLLY."

BY ALLEN UPWARD.

ILLUSTRATED BY THOS. DOWNEY.

VIII.

DISCOVERY OF THE VECTS—A DISAPPOINTED MISSIONARY— NAVAL WARFARE: THE FOLLY IN ACTION— FATAL COLLISION—SENSATIONAL JOURNALISM— WHIRLPOOLS—VENTNOR,

I T was during our stay at Shanklin that I made what I regard as my most interesting and important discovery about the population of the Isle of Wight, a discovery which has come as a shock on the ethnological world. I need scarcely say that I refer to the existence of that extraordinary race of aborigines on which I have bestowed the name of Vects.

Up to this time all the natives of the island whom we had encountered had been descendants of the Roman or Jutish immigrants, both of which peoples, as is well known, were branches of the great Aryan family of nations; and I had perhaps rashly come to the conclusion that the indigenous population was entirely white. My surprise was not less than that since shown by my brother ethnologists, when I now came, for the first time, upon specimens of a pure black race, which subsequent investigation showed to be thinly sprinkled over the island. This race I hold to be autochthonous, that is to say, I think it is clear that these Vects, as I have termed them, are the true aborigines who at one time occupied the whole country, though the few that are now to be found are all that have survived the desolating invasions of the warlike white settlers who now hold most of the towns along the coast. Although mingling to some extent with their white neighbours, the Vects seem to have rigidly held aloof from intermarriage with them—at least I found no traces of mulatto offspring in the districts explored by us.

These singular people present many difficult problems to the student of comparative ethnology. Their skins are perfectly black, except the ears and hands, which are of a dusky shade inclining to white. Yet they do not in the least resemble the ordinary negro of commerce, their hair and features being distinctly Euro-They appear to keep their women secluded in the Oriental manner; at all events, we failed to observe any females. Their language is a corrupt dialect of English, having many peculiarities in common with the eastern parts of Lon-Their dress, on the other hand, is quite unlike that worn by the rest of the islanders, and displays all the savage's well-known love for bright colours and tawdry ornaments. They are an extremely musical people, and possess a rich fund of fresh and delightful humour, which causes them to be in great demand as popular entertainers. During the summer season they lead a vagrant life on the shore, reaping a good harvest among the pleasure visitors. With the first approach

of winter they disappear, retiring no doubt to their homes in the mountainous interior.

There has been much discussion in ethnological circles as to the origin of these Vects. Some are disposed to connect them with the gipsies on account of their nomad customs. Another school has called them the Fort-builders, referring to them the erection of those mysterious round structures, already described, in the Solent, which these writers

declare are really Sun temples. I do not myself share the views of the eminent Plymouth Brother who has sought to prove that the Vects are descended from the lost ten tribes of Israel.

The first person to whom I communicated my remarkable discovery was the Member of

Parliament. The country being for the moment safe again, he had once more laid aside the cares of State and come down to Shanklin. I did not think it necessary to go into too much detail. I merely said to him:

"I want you to come ashore with me this morning. I have discovered some interesting people whom I should like to show you. They are Vects—"

"They are what?" he interrupted.

"Vects—the original natives of the island," I explained calmly. "They differ in many respects from the rest of the islanders, particularly in their complexions, which are very striking and unusual."

"What are they, then?" he asked. "Are they Celts?"

"I fancy not. It is difficult to classify them. They do not seem to me to resemble any known branch of the human species. They are a race apart."

"Like the Basques, perhaps?" he muttered, evidently much interested.

"I have grave doubts whether they are even Christians," I went on to say.

His missionary zeal was instantly aroused.



The "Vects."

"I must see them," he exclaimed. "This is most extraordinary. If you are right, there may be a great work to be done among them."

"That is just what I thought you would say when you heard of them. I cannot help thinking that your noble energy would be better expended in re-

claiming these interesting islanders, who have been neglected by our great Missionary Societies, than in trying to evangelise a miserable cabin-boy, whose possession of a soul is, after all, a bare hypothesis."

The Member of Parliament warmly wrung my hand before I had finished.

"I am sorry I have misjudged you," he said with feeling. "I have been accustomed to look on you as a worldling—I have even suspected you sometimes of being heartless and irreverent. I am truly glad to find I was mistaken. I shall know you better after to-day."

I thought so too.

We went ashore in the dinghy, and he

followed me with a hopeful light in his eyes as I led the way along the esplanade. Presently we came up to a dense ring of pleasure visitors surrounding a small open space where a few planks had been laid on the sand to form a temporary platform. On the platform were three Vects seated on campstools, while a fourth walked round the circle carrying a child's tin bucket, into which coppers were freely dropped by the onlookers under the influence of his merry blandishments. The other three were playing upon barbarous musical instruments, one wielding a concertina, the second a banjo, and the third a pair of ghastly objects which I understood to be bones-but too probably the remains of some cannibal

"There!" I said in a theatrical whisper, pointing them out to my companion. "Behold the unhappy savages whose existence in our midst is a reproach to Christian civilisation!"

The Member of Parliament gave me a quick, startled look.

"What are you talking about!" he exclaimed. "These men are not Vects. They are niggers!"

"Pardon me," I replied, "I differ from you in toto. My knowledge of ethnology assures me that you are in error. No person of common-sense could possibly mistake these men for negroes."

The expression on his face changed from disappointment to anger, and from anger to deep disgust.

"Either you are out of your mind or this is some shameful hoax!" he said sternly. "These men are simply nigger minstrels who have blacked their faces to amuse the vulgar crowd!"

"I do not believe it," I answered very firmly. "You have no right to cast such an aspersion on these poor creatures, whose black faces may conceal natures as noble as yours or mine."

At this moment there was a lull in the concert, and the Vect with the banjo com-

menced singing an artless ditty which ran something like this:

"If you're goin' to go upon the razzle-dazzle,

If you're goin' to knock a feller in the eye,

If you're goin' to go 'ome early through the

winder,

Don't do it while the copper's going by !

Don't do it—

Don't you do it—

Don't do it till the copper's gone aw'y!"

The Member of Parliament did not stay for the chorus, which was eagerly taken up by the large and fashionable audience. He turned on me one look—under which a man of refined and sensitive feelings would have died—and went back to the House. We are not now on speaking terms; and I see by the papers he has given notice of a Bill to regulate itinerant musicians.

I now come to the most terrifying of our adventures during the whole voyage, one which I cannot recall even now without my hair turning white. It was the morning of our last day at Shanklin, and the Tyrant had astonished us by asking leave to go ashore for an hour.

When he made the request we gazed at each other hardly able to conceal the furtive joy which sparkled in every eye. It was the first time that the Tyrant had quitted his post since we left Southampton. We felt like schoolboys whose master should suddenly ask them for a half-holiday. Making a strong effort to appear careless and indifferent, I granted the required permission, and we watched the Tyrant row to the beach and vanish in the crowd. Then we raised a muffled cheer, and turned to consider how best to take advantage of our temporary freedom.

It was a beautiful bright day, and the sea lay smooth as an infant's cheek. We decided to venture on a cruise. With the aid of the other hands the anchor was disentangled from the bed of the sea, the sails hoisted, and the sheets securely tied. Then we lured the Crew and Victim below with the pretext of lunch, battened down

the hatches, and prepared to enjoy ourselves. It was the first time we ever really had control of our own yawl. It was also the last.

Filled with the exhilarating sense that we were doing wrong, we sailed gaily across the bay, marking the forts which line the cliff hereabouts as thick as bathing machines, and wondering whether the grim engines whose nozzles frowned on us

through the embrasures would ever be used to deadly purpose against some marauding foe. I was guiding the yawl by means of the dachshund's head, and presently, noticing a small steam-tug out in the bay, I headed towards her. She was towing an extraordinary object something like a raft standing up on end, and as we came up there was a good deal of speculation as to what this could be, the Poet inclining to think it a German man-of-war on the way to Kiao-Chao, and the Bookmaker

hazarding the suggestion that it might be a loose-box.

We had some trouble to overhaul it, as the tug seemed anxious to avoid us. We observed her hoisting a flag, possibly intended as a signal. However, we were fast catching her, having the wind with us, when all at once the Poet, pointing towards the land, cried out:

"What's that?"

We turned our heads in time to see a white puff of smoke veiling one of the forts. Before the question was well out of his lips it was answered by the loud roar of

artillery, and a large black cannon-ball hurtled through the air within a cable's-length of the *Folly's* bows.

"They are firing on us!" yelled the Poet, and threw himself flat on the deck like one in a swound. The Bookmaker turned as white as this paper, and made a dive for the forecastle hatch.

"What are you doing?" I shouted, still holding on desperately to the tiller,

though I shook like a pennant in a gale.

"Going to have up the boy," was the hoarse response. "He knows a prayer."

I shall always be glad to think that in that moment I showed myself worthy of the high traditions of British seamen. With a presence of mind which all men would not have shown, I swung the dachshund violently over to windward. The main boom swept across the deck like an avalanche. nearly capsizing the yacht, as she came gallantly about, and the next instant we



"And I saw you jibe, sir."

were speeding swiftly back out of range. It was a display of cool yet daring seamanship of which Nelson would not have been ashamed. I did my duty, and have no desire to boast, but I feel that I should like some day to have for my simple and modest epitaph the words: "He jibed under fire."

As the Folly turned round I had a graphic object-lesson in the danger we had so narrowly escaped. The iron messenger of death, after missing us, had struck the floating raft and knocked it to sawdust. Every soul on board must have perished.

The enemy did not renew his fire, satisfied with having driven us off, and we were left to seek the explanation of this dastardly outrage, which had not even been preceded by the ultimatum usual between civilised foes. Was it due to the resentment of the islanders at our fearless investigations into their habits? Was it the Coroner who, baffled in his former plot against my life, had now prompted this fresh attempt? Or were we to trace in it the secret hand of the Benchers of our Inn, who had deluded themselves with false hopes of our perishing by shipwreck; and was this the result of their despair? The question remains an open one. According to the Bookmaker the odds are slightly on the Benchers, while the Coroner is an outside chance.

The Crew, disturbed by the lurch of the vessel in jibing, put his head up through the hatchway and said something or other about target practice. We saw no point in his remark.

We were sailing peacefully back to our anchorage when one of those incidents occurred which show how true is the text
—"In the midst of life we are in death."

I was still wielding the faithful dachshund when the Bookmaker called out from the bows: "Sail ahead!"

I had to yaw the boat's head off two or three points before I could catch sight of the strange sail. She was a double canoe, containing a manly-looking young fellow in a straw hat and flannels, and a very beautiful girl with blue eyes and golden hair, presumably his sister. Their backs were towards us as we came up, and the youth had laid down his paddle in order to clasp the girl round the waist from behind and whisper into her ear with all a brother's love. It was a charming picture, and I was so absorbed in watching it that I did not at once realise the likelihood of our colliding with them. thought struck me, the young man looked round and saw the Folly's bowsprit within a few yards of his head. The same idea

evidently occurred to him. A frightful change came over his face; he made a wild snatch at his paddle, and began using it for dear life, while from his lips there burst a strong exclamation—regrettably so, considering that there were ladies present—and one for which, alas! he would have so soon to render an account. I was hurt at the time, but I have long ago forgiven him.

His sister glanced round almost at the same moment, and grasped the situation. The roses instantly faded from her lovely cheeks; she curled up like some delicate anemone and sank forward, her golden locks raining over her face, while her despair found utterance in a low wail that all but unmanned me.

The brother, who was evidently not a trained seaman, had begun to urge the canoe in the direction which, as he thought, would carry him out of the yacht's way. I at once saw his mistake. At the moment the yawl was on the wrong tack, but my knowledge of navigation told me that as soon as I brought her round on the starboard tack a collision would be inevitable. It was a hard necessity, but sailors have to encounter many such in the course of their duty. I was not a free I was responsible for the lives of others, of the Poet and the Bookmaker men little fit to be hurried into Eternity! - of the Crew, and of the innocent Victim who had endeared himself to us by his childish ways. I knew that once upon the starboard tack everything that floated would have to get out of my way or take the consequences. Heaving a sigh, I laid my hand firmly on the tiller and ported.

There came a sharp rending crash, followed by a piercing shriek. I rushed to the side of the yacht and looked over. Our bows had struck the canoe amidships, cutting it in two like a lemon. The young man, loosing the paddle which might have saved his life, had clutched his sister's form as they found themselves in the water together, nobly forgetful of himself in the

endeavour to save her. For a moment he struggled gallantly to keep her head above the surface of the waves; but it was quickly evident that his efforts would be useless. Neither of the affectionate pair could swim better than anchors. Soon it was nearly over. The brother ceased to struggle, and they began to settle down slowly through the clear waters, his arms closely twined about her, while her drooping head rested upon his bosom, against the heart that would soon beat with love for her no They came up again once, the more. brother's teeth clenched in despair, and the young woman's large lustrous eyes wide open, and turned up at me with what seemed a last silent prayer for help. thought of throwing them the yacht's lifebuoy, but it was not our property; and I was afraid that if we let them come on board their wet things would make a mess about the deck. It was better as it was. Down they sank for the last time, still fondly clasping each other as in life, and we watched their beautiful forms fade out of sight beneath the waves. Presently two large bubbles rose to the surface side by side, touched, and became one, as though the souls of the drowned pair were uniting in the moment of death. All was over. "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."—II. Sam. i. 23.

It was a deeply interesting spectacle, and I would not have missed it for worlds. The Poet said it was one of those natural poems which do not require to be set off by the mechanical devices of art. The soft-hearted Bookmaker was so affected that he was obliged to go below for a drink.

After this little episode, which I hardly deemed of sufficient importance to enter in the Log, we got back again to Shanklin, where the Tyrant at once boarded us in a state of boiling indignation.

"I hope you've had a pleasant sail, gentlemen," he observed in anything but a pleasant tone. "I was a-watching you

when you was off of the fort what was target-firing. There was a fishing-boat sunk that way once; but perhaps you didn't see the signal to keep clear? And I saw you jibe, sir. You was pretty near over that time, warn't you, sir?"

I listened trembling, expecting every moment that he would make some nasty allusion to the accident to the brother and sister, but fortunately the distance had prevented his seeing that. We hastened to soothe his ruffled spirit with grog. But if he had been a man of suspicious nature he might have fathomed that something was amiss from the grovelling sycophancy with which he was obeyed during the next day or two. His lightest behest was law. He ordered me to luff, and I luffed, to keep her away, and I kept her away; and if he had ordered me to swallow the mainmast I dare not have refused.

Hitherto, I have said nothing of the Press on the Isle of Wight. We were now to have a specimen of its worst side, in a scandalous paragraph that appeared about this time in the Shanklin organ, and hastened our departure from the town. It was headed in sensational capitals:— "SAD TRAGEDY AT SEA, TWO LOVERS DROWNED, FOUL PLAY SUSPECTED, THE MURDERERS STILL AT LARGE," and went on in this strain:

"Two families staying in this town have been plunged into mourning by the sudden and terrible loss of the son of one and the daughter of the other, who were drowned yesterday while out together in a double The young couple were engaged, and the wedding was to have come off in a month's time. The bodies have not yet been recovered, but the canoe has been washed ashore, with a large breach in the side, bearing evidence of its having been stove in. As no one has come forward to say anything as to the collision, it is feared that the canoe must have been deliberately run down, and the police are engaged on an active search for the murderers. understand that a clue has been obtained.

and that the authors of the diabolical outrage will shortly meet with their deserts. The crime amounts to piracy, the penalty for which is hanging in chains."

The law of that last sentence was wrong, but apart from that the whole paragraph teemed with the grossest inaccuracies, whilst the malice which inspired it was only too evident. My first impulse was to write an indignant letter explaining that as we were on the starboard tack we had a complete answer to the charge. But on sounding the Tyrant cautiously I found reason to suspect that there had been a slight mistake, and that, as a matter of fact, we had been on the port tack when we struck the doomed craft. I feared this might complicate matters, and perhaps lead to offensive things being said if it became known. There is too little charity in this world. On the whole we thought it best to let the matter drop quietly, and seek fresh seas and harbours new. We set sail in the middle of the night this time, for a change. There was no noise, no vulgar pomp about our going. We folded our anchor like the Arabs, and as silently stole away.

The voyage from Shanklin to Ventnor is not without its perils. Round Dunnose Head there is a swift current known as a race, and the Tyrant pointed out certain rings of white foam upon the water which he informed us were "whirlypools." We sailed over several whirlpools. The dangers of whirlpools have been much exaggerated. The ones we saw might sink a button, but a stout match-box would live through the whole crowd of them. I shall never feel much interest in the Maëlstrom again. I doubt if it is what is claimed for it. The Maëlstrom is likely to be another of those frauds that are written up in the Press to gull the tourist public. I have no doubt the little Norwegian children paddle in the Maëlstrom in summer-time. Tyrant further told us that the shore of Bonchurch was lined with rocks; and the Poet confirmed this from his own

experience. He said he once hired a boat at Ventnor and tried to sail to Bonchurch, but he bumped on so many rocks that he had to give it up as a bad job and row back.

At last we rounded the point, and as we steered into the silent cove there loomed up before us in the darkness the vague outline of a cliff, its lower face encumbered with thickly-clustered points of light, almost as though the heavens had let down a shadowy draw-net to drag for This was romantic Ventnor, the Italian town which some djinn has in a freak lifted up from the shores of the Mediterranean to set it down on the Cornice of the Channel. Seen from the sea by day, it rises up from the water's edge in steep white stairs, irregularly laid, and overgrown with trees and climbing flowers, each step a house, whose white walls are patterned with green shutters in the true Venetian air. And where the houses cease the chalk scarp of Saint Boniface Down continues the ascent eight hundred feet into the blue, like a vast temple front, approached by a gigantic flight of garden terraces.

There is no other town like Ventnor in the four seas of Britain. The sight of it was so ideal, so utterly removed from all our common experience, that we felt it would be sacrilege to land. We could not bear to vulgarise that dream of a poetic Ventnor which the sea had given us by contact with the commonplace on shore. We resolved to go, taking that picture with us untarnished; so all the morning we lay on deck at our anchorage gazing toward the land, and when noon came we spread our white pinions and passed away.

IX.

HOMEWARD BOUND—LIGHTHOUSES—PATHETIC ANECDOTE — BLACKGANG — INDELIBLE LANDSCAPES—MANNERS MAKYTH MAN—THE NEEDLES—THE END.

And now the end of our memorable voyage was drawing near. That is to say,

the time for which we had chartered the Folly was running out, and we had to get her back to Southampton by the following Saturday, unless we meant to have her on our hands for another month. I will not say that we were glad of this, but I do not wish to deceive, and therefore I will not say that we were sorry. The fact is that the yawl was becoming a burden on our minds. We could never really enjoy ourselves on shore for thinking of the

other side of the way, shaded by a close plantation."

George Brannon is a master of the great secret of the literary art—simplicity. Here are no florid details, no attempt to magnify the subject, and to turn and twist it with every variety of tortured phrase. He simply makes his point, makes it clearly and briefly, and passes on. How many houseagents in compiling their florid registers of desirable properties might learn a lesson



awful extravagance we were guilty of in having a great yacht out there eating her bowsprit off. This thought constantly made us rush frantically back on board when we should have preferred a quiet game of billiards on dry land. We did not say much to each other about these feelings, but I several times suspected the Bookmaker of trying to desert, and I once caught the Poet darkly scrutinising the vessel's side below the water-line with the bradawl purchased from the Mayor of Newport in his itching grasp.

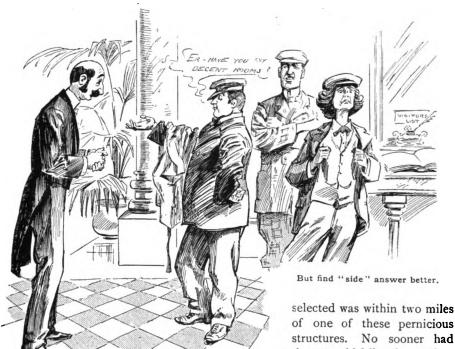
We sailed along beside the famous Undercliff, a natural terrace half-way up the face of the southern cliffs, covered with tropical vegetation, and lined with what the *Pleasure Visitor's Companion* describes as genteel residences. It would be impertinent on my part to go over the ground trodden by a George Brannon, Artist. I merely quote from him—one quotation is enough:—

"---- is a genteel residence on the

from the manly good sense of this accomplished man!

An hour after leaving Ventnor we came off the southern point of the island, and saw St. Catherine's lighthouse. Personally, I dislike lighthouses. I have been over every lighthouse round the British coast, with trifling exceptions, and one at Corfu, and to me there is a sameness about the things which prejudices me against them. But they possess an unnatural power over many persons, so that no sooner do those persons come within

a certain radius of a lighthouse than they are irresistibly drawn to go over it. It is like the baleful attraction exercised over the birds that dash themselves against the lantern at night. On this occasion both my companions proved to be subjects of this mysterious malady. The Bookmaker, I need hardly say, is not the kind of man who takes a real interest in lucidomesticological appliances or any other form of silvery-haired butcher, who had amassed a fortune by his profession, and possessed a cultivated mind, his passion being literary criticism, and his favourite organ an extremely ill-tempered and badmannered weekly review. In his extreme old age the doctors sent him down to die at the seaside. Unfortunately, they were ignorant that my great-uncle was a lighthouse subject, and the spot that they



useful knowledge, yet no sooner did we near this lighthouse than he wanted to land and have a look at it. Again, there is nothing less truly poetical than the interior of a lighthouse; it is all brass and glass, and smells horribly of oil; yet the Poet eagerly seconded the proposal, and only the positive refusal of the Tyrant to wreck the yawl on that inhospitable coast kept them from going.

I was not surprised at this. I have known more singular cases in my own family. I had a great-uncle, a beautiful old

of one of these pernicious structures. No sooner had the poor old fellow been taken out of the invalid carriage in which they had brought

him down and put to bed, than he began to display a strange restlessness for which they were unable to account. Opiates were administered, the latest issue of his beloved Review was put into his hands; but the relief obtained was only temporary. In his first rational moments the dying man asked feverishly if there was not a lighthouse in the neighbourhood. The trained nurse in attendance perceived what was wrong, and soothed him with a pious falsehood. The deception was useless. That night the aged sufferer was left securely tucked in his bed, his out-of-door clothes removed, the window fastened, and the door locked from outside, while the house-door was chained and bolted, and a ferocious mastiff placed on guard in the grounds. When the morning came my great-uncle had disappeared. The doors stood wide open, and the mastiff's corpse was discovered on the path in a pool of blood, the neat slit in its weasand betraying the work of a skilled hand. For two miles the bloody trail was followed over rocks, through hedges, and up precipitous ways where a chamois would have turned giddy. last they came upon the dear old butcher lying dead against the lighthouse door, his cheek laid against the bottom panel, the Review clasped to his breast, and in his eyes the smile of eyes that have seen a Great Light.

This anecdote is slightly exaggerated for the sake of artistic effect.

After passing the lighthouse we had to keep out to sea to escape the perils of the ill-famed Blackgang Chine. George Brannon, Artist, refers to this spot as having been the haunt of a desperate gang of pirates; but when we passed along there was no suspicious-looking craft in the offing. In fact, there was no boat visible except our own. On shore, however, we could discern traces of a hotel, a bazaar, and several lodging-houses. I am not sure that I always understand George Brannon. It is sometimes difficult to tell whether his observations proceed from a spirit of extreme simplicity, or covert but malignant satire.

Passing this Chine the Tyrant related a grim story of its perils. It appears that at this point on the coast the sea at certain periods rolls in an extraordinary isolated wave, which submerges the beach far above the usual watermarks. Not long before our visit a lady staying in the place was walking quietly upon the beach, well out of reach, as she supposed, of the tide. The sea was breaking down below, not

boisterously; there was no storm or unusual commotion of the elements to give notice of the danger. All at once, without the smallest warning, without any apparent cause, a huge wall of water rose up out of the sea and came sweeping with terrific speed into the shore. The destined victim saw it coming, but, never dreaming that it could pass beyond the ordinary limit of the tide, she continued walking along the dry part of the shore. The gigantic wave rolled in, never paused nor broke, but rushed right up the beach, dashed the unhappy lady off her foothold, and returned to the place whence it came, carrying her corpse in its white jaws, to be mangled in the green caverns below.

Such was the Tyrant's tale. He added that it was no uncommon thing for small boats to be caught by the same wave and hurled high and dry upon the shore. It was very interesting, but I think we should have enjoyed it more if he had waited till we were round the corner. There were a number of vicious-looking waves about, and the thought that any one of them might suddenly erect itself twenty feet into the air and swamp the Folly with all hands was anything but reassuring.

From Blackgang to Freshwater Gate is a long and hungry sail. According to the chart the distance is about twelve miles, but I made it fully forty-eight by dead reckoning. At one time, after the Poet's third lunch, it looked as though the stores were likely to give out. But that sagacious Yacht Provision man at Southampton had evidently foreseen this particular crisis, his large and liberal calculations had amply provided for it, and, as a matter of fact, we still had rations for a week on board at the conclusion of the voyage.

On either side of the low shingly beach which guards the narrow gap of Freshwater, two long lines of cliff, Afton to the east and Freshwater to the westward, rise like the white extended pinions of some colossal seabird. The little bay resembles Culver Cliff in

this respect, that it presents an extremely interesting scene in any state of the weather. I have the Pleasure Visitor's Companion's authority for this. This indifference to weather is one of the strong points of the island. It is not like those places that can be melted away by the first shower of rain. For instance, in this very bay there are two islet rocks, one with a hole right through it. Well, you may come along in the midst of a thunderstorm, or when the wind is blowing up a cyclone, and those two rocks and that hole will be there just the same. You might think the damp would make those rocks shrink, maybe, or that the wind would blow that hole away? Nothing of the kind; there is no nonsense of that sort about this scenery.

We reached Freshwater rather late, and at once cast anchor. It was our first intention to spend the night on board, but we subsequently changed our minds. moment the anchor was down, the Folly began to behave in a very startling manner. Instead of riding quietly on the waves, she began to take short jumps from side to side, as if something were biting her The Poet threw out a suggestion at keel. first that she had the rudder-ache, but any tendency on our part to frivolity was swiftly mastered by other and far more powerful feelings. Personally, I am a good sailor, and rather enjoy a little knocking about, but I noticed the Poet going queerer and queerer about the gills, and the Bookmaker taking furtive nips every other second at his flask, and compassion, or something, began to stir up my inside like a pestle.

"You had better come ashore, you men," I said earnestly, trying to balance myself by means of the cabin skylight. "You aren't looking well."

"Get out!" returned the Bookmaker.
"I'm looking a darned sight better than you, I should hope. Why, you are actually green. Come ashore, if you like; I don't mind."

"Don't quarrel," mouned the Poet feebly, "it wastes time. Let us get ashore first, and discuss how we feel afterwards."

This was talking sense. At the same moment, as if to enforce the moral, the Folly gave a mad leap into the air, and came down upon the water with a dull sickening thud. Making one grab for my pyjamas, I bolted over the side into the dinghy. The other two followed without staying to pack up, and the Tyrant mercifully rowed us to dry land.

As soon as our feet touched the shingle our spirits singularly revived. Bidding the Tyrant send ashore for us in the morning we set out in search of a pub. to shelter us for the night. The first one we came to seemed modest and appropriate to our forlorn condition, and we walked in.

We were met in the hall by an elderly maiden of about sixty summers, who viewed us with ill-concealed hostility.

"Good-evening, madam. Can you put us up for the night?" I asked, trying to atone for our deficiency of luggage by an excess of courtesy.

"I dare say I can," she muttered grudgingly. "I suppose you don't mind sleeping together?"

I shuddered.

"Have you only one room, then," I asked weakly.

"We have only one bed," was the uncompromising retort.

"Thank you," I said hastily, drawing back; "I think we had better try elsewhere."

"No, no, old fellow," the Bookmaker broke in. "One of us can sleep on a sofa. I don't mind the floor, myself. This place is good enough for me."

The aged damsel turned her experienced eye on the Bookmaker.

"This is a Temperance hotel," she announced.

That settled him. He collapsed like a yawl's main-sail when the peak halliard is let go with a run.

"Come away," he had just strength to

gasp. "Let's get outside. I can't breathe here."

We stumbled out, the proprietress watching us off with an air of evident relief. The moment we were the other side of the threshold, she closed the door with an ominous slam, and we heard the noise of chains and bolts.

The look-out was becoming serious. It was getting dark, and we had nowhere to pass the night. We wandered on, and presently found ourselves before a palatial building something like Buckingham Palace. The Poet looked at it, and shook his head.

"It's no good trying there," he observed hopelessly. "They'll never take us in without luggage."

"There is only one thing to do," I answered. "We tried politeness at the other place, and it was a failure. Here we must try bounce. You leave it to me."

Placing myself at the head of the dejected pair, I marched boldly up the marble steps of the hotel and stalked into the hall. A man in livery opened the inner doors, and a swagger individual in evening dress came forth from the manager's office to meet us.

Gazing over him superciliously, I said:

"Er-take me to the managaw!"

"I am the manager, sir," he answered, with a mixture of surprise and fear in his tones.

I threw another scornful glance at him.

"Er—have you got any decent rooms you can give us?"

He glanced with obvious hesitation at the Poet's flannels and the Bookmaker's even more singular disguise.

"I have some rooms, certainly," he answered.

"Decent ones?" I repeated sternly.
"We don't want attics, you know."

"I have three very good bedrooms on the first floor," he said, evidently wavering. "Do you want three rooms?"

I turned to the others.

"Er-what do you say They can

give us three bedrooms—will that do. . We needn't bother about a private sitting-room just for one night, if you fellows don't mind grubbing in the coffee-room?"

The Poet managed to shrug his shoulders with an air of contemptuous indifference. The Bookmaker was speechless. I turned to the manager.

"Er—we will make those rooms do," I said with patronage. "You dine at eight, I suppose?"

"Half-past seven, sir. They are just sitting down now." He gave an apologetic cough. "Is your luggage outside?" he enquired, in soft, snake-like tones, his eyes resting suspiciously on my pyjamas which I carried loose in my hand.

"Er—we have no other luggage," I responded carelessly. "We have just sailed in on our yacht"—I pronounced this word as though we had a five hundred ton steamer outside—"and we thought we would sleep on shore for a change."

The manager's distrust vanished like a dark cloud.

"Certainly, gentlemen." He beckoned the liveried menial from the door. "Show these gentlemen up to Numbers 1, 2 and 3."

The menial rashly advanced to the foot of the staircase to lead us up. I arrested him with a stony glare.

"Er—will you take my things," I said, holding out the pyjamas with hellish pride.

It was a master-stroke, as the other two admitted when they congratulated me afterwards. The liveried menial's knees shook beneath him as he received the charge, and the manager, bowing to the very earth, announced that dinner should be delayed till we were ready to sit down.

This little experience throws a light on human nature, amusing to the cynic, but deeply saddening to the wise and good.

The next day was our last on board. Our memorable adventure was reaching its close, and I must hurry over the few details that remain to be told.

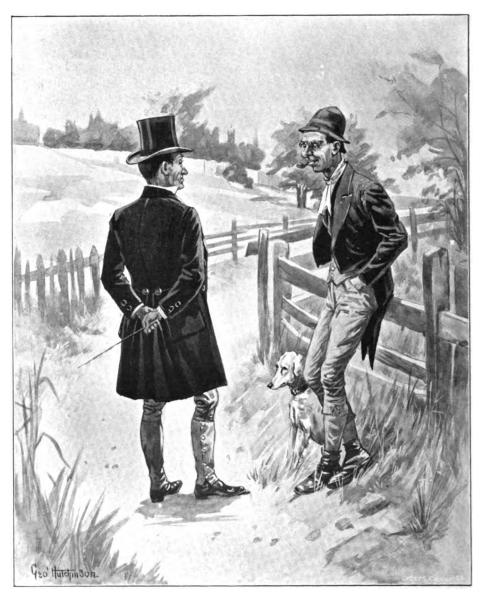
We sailed along past the gleaming sides of the great western down, marked here and there with holes and caverns going in from the sea. Concerning two of these, the *Pleasure Visitor's Companion* informed us that they were "whimsically named *Lord Holmes' Parlour and Kitchen* from the fact, it is said, of that noble man having occasionally there enjoyed a picnic refreshment with his friends." The Bookmaker was strongly interested by this passage, and said he should like to have known old Holmes. He expressed the opinion that that nobleman must have been a demon.

At the extreme western point of the island we came upon a row of what looked like huge stalagmites of chalk rising out of the water. We were informed that these objects were called the Needles. The name is not a good one. The person who first called these natural specimens needles was a born fool. They are not in the least like needles. They are more like the decayed teeth of a shark about the size of the Isle of Wight than anything else. You might as well call

the Matterhorn a needle as these things. Tooth-combs would have been a better name for them than needles. They might pass as a bad imitation of a buzz-saw, but as needles they are a pure and simple swindle. One of them has recently been washed away—and I am glad of it.

So we found ourselves back in the Solent at last, and sailed past Totland Bay, and Yarmouth, and the wooded shores of Lymington and Beaulieu on the port hand, till we made Calshot Castle, and set our course up Southampton Water with a fair wind for home. And the rest of our adventures, and the discoveries we made; and how the Poet was taken captive by a Siren and became a respectable married man, and was never heard of more: and how the Bookmaker saw the Sea Serpent and took the pledge in consequence, and is now a well-known figure on Temperance platforms; and how I made my triumphant entry into the Temple, amid the wailing and gnashing of teeth of certain Authorities whom I think it in better taste not to indicate more closely; and all the other things that we did-are they not written in the Log of the Folly?





Squire.—"Good-morning, Mike. Looking for an appetite for breakfast?"

Mike.—"Faix, oi've got the appetite, yer honour, but divil the breakfast can I foind!"